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ABSTRACT

Individuals have increasingly recognized the role that guidance for learning and work can play in encouraging adults to achieve their educational and personal goals. This pack of materials was designed to help those who offer guidance to adults and take a pro-active approach to developing quality assurance. These seven booklets are intended for use by, among others, guidance practitioners in career and educational services; managers with a responsibility for guidance or quality in Training and Enterprise Councils (TEC); and members of guidance agency steering groups and networks. Booklet One provides an introduction to the pack along with an explanation of terms and acronyms. The second booklet explains the quality systems referred to in this series. Sections 3 and 4 offer professionals points to consider when choosing a guidance system and when implementing a strategy. Also an example is provided of a guidance quality system that has been extensively tested and adapted. In booklet five, the link between quality standards, occupational competence and training are explored. In the sixth folder, six examples of implementing quality systems in guidance settings are profiled. The final section lists published resources on guidance systems. (RJM)

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in guidance for adults

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Section 1

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Introduction

Guidance for learning and work takes place in a range of settings: careers services, education guidance agencies, educational and training establishments, workplaces, and even through telephone helplines. There is increasing recognition of the role guidance can play in encouraging adults to return to learning and achieve their personal goals as well as contributing to national training targets for a skilled workforce. Reports such as *Unfinished Business* (OFSTED/Audit Commission) have stressed the importance of initial guidance in ensuring that students complete their studies successfully.

At the same time, industry and the service sector have paid increasing attention to quality matters. The Government is keen to raise standards in guidance by opening up careers and guidance services to competition, and setting up the Advice, Guidance and Counselling Lead Body (AGCLB) to establish occupational standards and new qualifications. For the new bodies funding guidance, quality standards are an important aid in establishing accountability and are sometimes a requirement for the award of contracts. Both the government and guidance practitioners stress the importance of the quality of the client's experience, and this focus has led to the development of charters and statements of entitlement.

Many of these developments make guidance services' existing commitment to quality **explicit** and **recognised**. This pack is designed to help those offering guidance to adults in a variety of contexts to take a pro-active approach to developing quality assurance.

However, because both guidance services to adults and the education, training and employment fields are in a period of rapid transition, it makes it difficult to recommend a particular quality system to suit all contexts. This pack therefore offers a process - the quality cycle - which an agency at any stage of development can use to develop or review their system of quality assurance.

The pack also contains a description of current quality systems applicable to guidance for adults, and a section on standards for staff competence. In addition we have reproduced the quality framework which several freestanding services, TEC guidance networks and colleges have adapted to use in their particular context. A number of case studies are included to demonstrate the process by which organisations have adapted external models and developed internal standards to ensure quality.

The pack will be of interest to:

- guidance practitioners in careers and educational guidance services, colleges and TEC-funded provision;
- managers with a responsibility for guidance or quality in TECs, LEAs and educational institutions;
- members of guidance agency steering groups and networks.

It will also be useful to policy makers and funding agencies, including the Employment Department (ED), Department for Education (DFE), the Further Education Funding Councils (FEFC), the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) and Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), and to independent evaluators, inspectors and consultants.

The sections are printed separately so that they can be used according to the needs of the organisation. They can be used by individuals or groups setting up quality systems, or photocopied for staff development exercises. The process of reflecting on the quality of the service, and devising a subsequent development plan, can be an important means of focusing staff energies on the key purposes of the service.

Contents

The list of contents which follows will help readers to use the pack flexibly. For example, readers already familiar with recent developments in quality systems will not need to refer to Section 2. It is followed by an explanation of terms and acronyms used throughout the pack.

The pack contains seven booklets.

Contents

1. Introduction

Background to the pack; explanation of terms and acronyms

2. Quality in guidance - an update

Explanation of quality systems referred to elsewhere in the pack including BS5750, TQM, IIP, charters and recent national and sector developments

3. The quality cycle

Points to consider when choosing a system and implementing a strategy

4. The quality framework

Example of a guidance quality system that has been extensively trialled and adapted

5. Quality and training

The link between quality standards, occupational competence and training

6. Case studies

Six examples of implementing quality systems in guidance settings:

- working from staff and organisational development plans
- standards developed by a multi-agency
- TEC guidance network
- a careers service integrating national systems
- a comprehensive college strategy in which customer satisfaction is key
- a cross-college approach to quality assurance
- a multi-college approach to developing standards for threshold services

7. Further reading

Selection of key publications

Sections 2, 4, 5 and 6 include contact addresses where further information can be obtained.

Acknowledgements

The proposal for a pack on quality in guidance for adults came from the trialling of the quality framework included in *The Quest for Quality in Educational Guidance for Adults* (UDACE, 1991). This development work, undertaken for the National Educational Guidance Initiative is described in Section 4. We are grateful to the consultants involved in that project, for their work on sections of this publication:

Carole Barnes
Martin Oakeshott
Jackie Sadler

We would also like to thank the agencies who shared their practice for the case studies:

AZTEC
Dudley Educational Guidance Service for Adults
Harlow College
Manchester College of Arts and Technology
North Yorkshire Careers Service
Oaklands College

Glossary

The following are working definitions for terminology used in the pack:

A quality system is made up of the mechanisms used (for example the assigned quality responsibilities, the procedures to be followed and the functions to be covered) and their documentation. A quality system is one that has the potential for delivering services to specification, although it cannot guarantee that all services will meet it.

Quality assurance refers to checks and audits which are carried out to ensure that procedures are - in practice - followed. This activity is usually the responsibility of managers.

Standards are clear descriptions of good practice to which an agency or service agrees to conform. Sometimes standards are described as minimum standards, at others as more aspirational. Professional standards are often seen to be the responsibility of individuals and service or organisational standards a collective.

National standards are used to define the level of competent performance which a person working in a particular occupational area should be able to demonstrate. These standards are drawn up by the relevant Industrial Lead Body and when approved can be assessed as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

Targets are clear statements of what an agency , or person, should achieve within a given timescale; they should be clear, relevant, measurable and achievable.

Performance measures are the quantitative or qualitative measurements used to demonstrate that a target has been reached.

Performance indicator is a more common term and is sometimes used in the same way as performance measure. It usually refers to information of a numerical or statistical kind which indicates how an organisation is progressing towards achieving its aims.

Acronyms and abbreviations

BS5750	British standards relating to quality assurance
ISO9000	The international equivalent of BS5750
AGCLB	Advice, Guidance and Counselling Lead Body
APL	Accreditation of prior learning
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
C&G	City and Guilds of London Institute
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CSB	Careers Service Branch
ED	Employment Department
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
FEU	Further Education Unit
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HEFC	Higher Education Funding Council
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Council
IAP	Individual action planning
ICG	Institute for Careers Guidance
IIP	Investors in People
lec	Local Enterprise Company (Scotland)
NACCEG	National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance
NAEGA	National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
NEGI	National Educational Guidance Initiative
NICEC	National Institute of Careers Education and Counselling
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
ROA	Record of achievement
RSA	Royal Society of Arts
SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Council
SQM	Strategic quality management
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification
TECs	Training and Enterprise Councils
TQM	Total quality management
UDACE	Unit for the Development of Adult and Continuing Education

Section 2

An update

Introduction

There has been considerable development of quality assurance systems and standards within the guidance community in recent years. *The Quest for Quality in Educational Guidance for Adults* (UDACE, 1991), whose quality framework is included in Section 4 of this pack, influenced a number of other developments, including the production of statements of client entitlement and quality standards.

Recent factors accelerating the development of measurable quality standards include:

- a concern among professional associations and their members that agreed service standards should not be eroded;
- greater concern by government departments to ensure that the products and services funded by them are quality assured;
- the setting up of the FEFCs and HEFC, which are developing new arrangements for inspection and quality assessment;
- the work of AGCLB to establish competence standards (for further information see Section 5 on Quality and Training);
- the introduction of a market into education and careers guidance, through developments such as competitive tendering to deliver careers guidance services and ED initiative such as Gateways to Learning. As a result of the pressures of the market agencies are obliged to compete for clients, and therefore may wish to demonstrate the quality of their provision funders need to ensure the quality of the provision they are funding, particularly when a market is being established, which may attract newcomers to the field.

Careers and educational guidance take place in a variety of settings and national quality initiatives will therefore affect some services more than others. Where guidance provision is located within larger institutions or organisations, internal approaches to quality assurance will affect the services provided.

Factors affecting the quality of guidance provision include:

- the competence of the staff;
- the adequacy of procedures and extent to which they are followed consistently;
- the behaviour of staff and customers of a service;
- the organisation's commitment to continuous improvement of services;
- the resources available.

These factors are reflected in differing degrees in the various approaches to achieving quality and are listed below.

Different approaches to quality

BS5750/ISO9000

BS5750 is the British standard, and ISO9000 its international equivalent, which ensures that quality is achieved consistently by the development of a system of written procedures, to which working practices have to conform.

In April 1991, Sandwell College became the first FE college to achieve BS5750. In 1992 Huddersfield University became the first higher education (HE) institution to achieve BS5750 recognition and ELTEC in East Lancashire became the first TEC to do so. Others have since followed suit. Some TECs are actively encouraging their sub-contractors to follow this route. While those achieving BS5750 report positive benefits, there has also been considerable resistance to taking this approach among other organisations on the grounds of:

- the considerable costs of implementing BS5750 especially for small organisations;
- the control exercised by the producer/service provider in setting the standard themselves, which may not reflect the level of quality acceptable to others;
- a concern that quality standards for manufacturing are not necessarily applicable to service industries;
- inadequate mechanisms for ensuring continuous quality improvement.

Investors in People

Investors in People (IIP) is a government initiative designed to raise standards by setting and communicating business goals and developing people to meet those goals. It is concerned with the continuing development and training of employees, making links between staff development and the organisation's business plan, and the evaluation of staff development in order to improve its effectiveness.

The national standard includes four principles together with a number of assessment indicators. IIP is being marketed and delivered through TECs and Local Enterprise Companies (lecs), where some staff have been trained as approved assessors of organisations.

The steps which need to be undertaken to achieve recognition as an Investor in People are:

- an initial diagnosis by a representative of the local TEC to ascertain how near the standard the organisation is;
- the agreement of a formal action plan to reach the standard;
- assessment by the local TEC or national assessor, once the standard is reached.

By October 1993 nine TECs had achieved recognition as Investors in People. All 82 TECs are committed to achieving the standard. There has been considerable interest from education, training and guidance providers, including:

- 250 schools, 214 FE colleges, 11 universities and 21 careers services, which are committed to reaching the standard;
- six schools, six colleges of FE and one careers service (Coventry) which have achieved the standard.

Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a philosophy developed in Japan and the United States which emphasises the need for continuous improvement in the design and delivery of services. This involves a change of ethos within an organisation, led by senior management, which encourages individuals to take greater responsibility for the quality of the work they produce. TQM emphasises consultation with and participation by customers, including internal customers receiving services from others in the organisation.

The impact of TQM is long term and its success cannot therefore be judged at an early stage. The concept of continuous improvement has proved popular among education and training institutions and bodies such as LEAs, some of which are adopting TQM as one approach to improving quality. However, while the experience of many organisations is positive, some which have attempted to follow the TQM route without making appropriate resources available have subsequently experienced scepticism and lack of commitment among staff.

Charters, statements of entitlement and codes of practice

In Autumn 1992, the Institute for Careers Guidance (ICG), and National Association for EJducational Guidance for Adults (NAEGA) produced a joint statement - A Guidance Entitlement for Adults, with advice from staff of the National Educational Guidance Initiative (NEGI), covering the

- purpose and value of guidance;
- rights of the client;
- responsibilities of guidance agencies;
- responsibilities of guidance practitioners.

It also included a public statement for display, which is available from NAEGA and ICG.

Charters have also been produced for adult learners, such as that published by NAEGA in 1991, which includes an entitlement to guidance. The National Union of Students (NUS) published its charter in December 1992, which represents one of the few contributions to the debate from the viewpoint of the consumer. The NUS, which is concerned about teaching standards, also favours learner contracts, which include students negotiating targets with lecturers and assessing progress against national guidelines for each course. Individual student unions, such as at Manchester University, have also been negotiating their own charters.

The charters for further and higher education were issued by DFE in September 1993. The charters set standards in relation to:

- services which can be expected by students, employers and parents;
- information students can expect to receive;
- facilities which students can expect to receive;
- complaints procedures which can be followed.

The Charter for FE establishes important entitlements to information, guidance and counselling, including impartial advice for students wishing to transfer to other courses or colleges. By summer 1994 colleges are expected to develop their own charters, with learner agreements and an annual review of student satisfaction.

Response to charters has been varied, with concerns over the extent to which:

- customers have (or have not) been consulted;
- charters attempt to set standards which are difficult to measure;

  or, in contrast

- charters may concentrate on subsidiary features which are easy to measure, but not central to the services being provided.

It is clearly impossible for charters issued at national level to include adequate detail to apply to local situations, and many guidance agencies and institutions have prepared their own charters, student contracts or client entitlement statements. These often contain a description of the duties of the student/client as well as their rights. Staff charters are also under discussion in some areas.

In some cases, charters and statements of entitlement are being used for marketing purposes but there is some concern that they could be regarded as a legally enforceable contracts so that the issuing of codes of practice is regarded as a safer route.

National developments

Advice, Guidance and Counselling Lead Body

The Lead Body is crucial in establishing cross-sectoral standards for staff at all levels undertaking guidance. Standards should be agreed in 1994 with qualifications coming on stream in 1995. For further information on quality standards and staff competence see Section 5.

National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance

In 1993 the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) agreed with other parties seeking a national forum to set up a national council in 1994.

The National Council will be independent and its members will be drawn from groups with an interest in the field, including professional bodies, the education and training community, employment interests and government departments. The Council aims to 'promote improvements in the quality, quantity and consistency of guidance about learning and work throughout the United Kingdom ... and ... monitor the quality of all publicly funded guidance provision by reviewing reports from inspection services, evaluation studies and other sources'. (*The Case for Establishing a National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance* RSA, 1993)

Developments in different sectors

Training and Enterprise Councils and Local Enterprise Companies

Initiatives such as Gateways to Learning and Skillchoice have contributed to the development of service standards by requiring providers to:

- describe and document the services they offer in order to produce a statement of client entitlement;
- calculate unit costs;
- obtain a signed statement of satisfaction from clients;
- record destination data.

They are also encouraging the evaluation of the learning outcomes of guidance by developing the Measure of Guidance Impact (NFER, 1993).

Many agencies were already operating monitoring and evaluation systems, but the initiatives have enabled data from agencies in a local network to be aggregated and used in the TEC for planning purposes. In some cases TECs have also helped small agencies to analyse their data.

ED's *TEC Quality Assurance: Supplier Management Requirements* lay down that from April 1994 TECs arrangements will need to ensure that all the services and products which TECs purchase from suppliers meet TECs' quality requirements.

The arrangements concern the following areas:

- outputs and standards;
- contract capability;
- the delivery process;
- review arrangements;
- delivery and output evaluation;
- continuous improvement.

The delivery and output evaluation requires suppliers to operate a system for collecting customer feedback on services and products. Periodic audits of the TECs' arrangements will be conducted and ED will also occasionally conduct sample visits to TECs' suppliers. Programmes of corrective action will be agreed in cases of deficiency. Some TECs are already piloting these new arrangements with guidance providers.

Careers services

In the summer of 1993, ED published its prospectus establishing competitive tendering for local careers services in 13 pilot Pathfinder areas from April 1994. Within three years this will be extended to the whole country and ED will contract with the new services and monitor their activities.

The *Requirements and Guidance for Providers* outline the scope and quality expected of the new agencies. Successful bidders will be required to comply with the same quality characteristics as are being required of the TECs concerning outputs and standards and each careers service must also produce a statement of client entitlement, identifying the services to be provided. Adults who are not already in vocational education can be charged for guidance, and would not necessarily have the same entitlements as statutory groups.

Institution-based guidance

A major quality consideration in FE and HE is the maintenance of standards as large increases in student numbers have resulted in higher staff/student ratios. Within the guidance field, the principle of impartiality is under particular discussion: some practitioners feel that because of the drive to increase numbers, they may be pressurised to encourage clients to apply to their own institution, even if this is not in the individual's best interest. Funding from FEFC, at the entry phase, based on student enrolments rather than the number of those offered guidance, may create a financial disincentive to providing impartial guidance.

Within FE and the sixth-form college sector there are new plans for inspections, which urge colleges to produce detailed quality assessment reports, against which inspectors can judge their performance. Guidance provision will be directly affected, since recruitment, guidance and counselling will be assessed on the same five point scale as other college functions.

The framework for inspections in the FEFC circular 93/28 Assessing Achievement in September 1993 outlines a '... distinctive approach to quality and assessment in further education which recognises that provision must not only be fit for its purpose but

should aim for high standards and excellence
should satisfy and involve the customer
should encourage continual improvement

and

should enable the government to be assured that the large sums of money devoted to this sector are well spent.'

Inspectors are likely to request documentary evidence on:

- policy and practice on student recruitment;
- diagnostic assessment;

- induction;
- accreditation of prior learning;
- personal tutoring;
- counselling and guidance;
- careers education and guidance.

In HE, the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCs) are concentrating on the measurement of teaching quality within departments and HEQC is making audit visits to the HE sector to report on quality assurance and quality control procedures. The UDACE/CNAA Guidance in HE Project from 1990-2 demonstrated the close relationship between the quality of guidance provision, the enhancement of the quality of learning, and the institution's quality assurance systems. HEQC's Division of Credit and Access is drawing on this project, recent work on guidance in credit-based systems and the Quality Framework (Section 4) to develop quality assurance guidelines.

Issues emerging

Uncertainty over choice of systems

In the future, the majority of funders of guidance are likely to specify the quality criteria, if not the quality systems, which guidance providers will be expected to adopt. Similarly, in industry, BS5750 accredited companies often require their suppliers to obtain the BS5750 standard. Many institutions and guidance providers appear to be approaching quality from a number of angles, including commitment to IIP, reviewing the comprehensiveness and adequacy of written procedures - but not necessarily applying for BS5750 recognition, and adopting the TQM philosophy of continuous improvement. It is understandable that guidance providers should be cautious about investing considerable resources in adopting external quality systems, such as BS5750, which may not then be acceptable to their funders.

However, all services will need to provide evidence of the quality of the work they are undertaking, and while many agencies have an implicit commitment to working to quality principles, in some cases this is not explicit or adequately documented. When quality audits are carried out, documentation will be required as evidence, and quality ratings will be affected if this is not available.

It is also important that the guidance principles are not lost as other quality assurance (QA) systems are implemented. Guidance professionals must therefore articulate the key features of their services and become involved in the development of quality systems which will affect their working practices and the services they offer to clients.

Coherence in data collection and analysis

The shortage of statutory funding for adult guidance has required providers to seek funding from a variety of sources. This has led to requirements for different types of data from internal and external funders. In some cases, similar types of data, such as that relating to client profile, may be required by funders, but the categories and timescales for monitoring and evaluation may differ.

As new funding becomes available, new systems are being established to capture the required data. While it is crucial that services are adequately evaluated, it is the responsibility of both funders and providers to ensure that this is undertaken as efficiently as possible to allow the maximum resources to be devoted to the provision of the service to its users. In some cases, there is a need to:

- review and rationalise systems;
- sample where possible or use the same information for varied purposes;
- develop documentation which is user friendly;
- encourage service users to provide much of the required data themselves;
- provide funding to design and develop computerised systems;
- obtain access to new technologies, such as optical mark readers;
- establish databases for capturing data and recording client information.

Contact addresses

National developments

The National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance (NACCEG)
c/o RSA
8 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6EZ

The Advice, Guidance and Counselling Lead Body (AGCLB)
Secretariat
Julie Janes Associates
40A High Street
Welwyn
Hertfordshire AL6 9EQ

Charters, statements of entitlement and codes of practice

The National Association for Educational
Guidance for Adults (NAEGA)
1a Hilton Road
Milngavie
Glasgow G62 7DN

The Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG)
27a Lower High Street
Stourbridge
West Midlands DY8 1TA

The National Union of Students (NUS)
461 Holloway Road
London N7 6LJ

Tel: 071-272 8900

Different approaches to quality

Investors in People
An information pack about IIP, including the national standard, can be obtained from:

Investors in People UK
Room N805
Moorfoot
Sheffield S1 4PQ

Tel: 0742-5934271

BS5750
An information pack on BS5750 can be obtained from:

BSI Quality Assurance
British Standards Institution
PO Box 375
Milton Keynes
MK14 6LL

Tel: 0908-220908

Developments in different sectors

Careers services
Copies of the Pathfinder prospectus are available from:

Careers Service
P.O. Box 200
Stratford-upon-Avon
Warwickshire CV37 9ZZ

Copies of the Requirements and Guidance for Providers are available from:
Careers Service Branch
Room E417
Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ

Training and Enterprise Councils and Local Enterprise Companies
TEC Quality Assurance: Supplier Management Requirements of the Employment Department produced by:

The Quality Assurance Division
Employment Department
Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ

Further education
Circular on *Assessing Achievement* (93/28) produced by:

The Further Education Funding Council
Sheriffs Orchard
Greyfriars Road
Coventry CV1 3PJ

Higher education
Guidelines on Quality Assurance and Checkilist for Quality Assurance Systems (HEQC, 1994)

Higher Education Quality Council
c/o Centre for Continuing Education
University of Bradford
Bradford BD7 1 DP

Section 3

The quality cycle

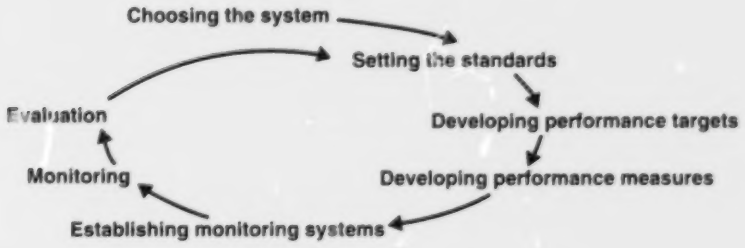
The quality cycle

Introduction

This section outlines a process to help guidance agencies establish quality systems suited to their particular needs. It offers a model - a quality cycle - which can be adapted to different institutional settings. For each stage of the quality cycle there are key questions to address.

Those starting the pack with this section may like to know that the introduction has a glossary of terms, and examples of standards, targets and measures are found in the case studies (Section 6) and the quality framework (Section 4).

The quality cycle



Choosing the system

What is the purpose of having a quality system?

Services need to consider what outcomes they want from the development and implementation of a quality system in order to choose appropriate systems. These could include

Objective	Possible outcome
Improving the client's experience	● development of charters, codes of practice ● statements of client entitlement ● feedback from users on the service ● setting up a complaints procedure
Accountability to users and other customers	● reliable data for funders ● defined target groups ● services delivered and outcomes defined ● demonstration of cost-effectiveness
Improved market share	● descriptions of service quality levels ● identification of new markets and services ● prioritisation of resources

External funders also need systems to receive feedback on the services they are supporting in order to ensure that their objectives are being met and value for money received. The data analysis can also assist them in developing and reviewing new services.

What is available?

Externally set standards

A range of models are in use nationally and are described in Section 2 with contact addresses for more information. They can be grouped broadly into

Generic systems:	e.g. BS5750
Guidance-focused:	e.g. devised by Careers Service Branch (CSB), TECs, NAEGA, ICG and other professional organisations; AGCLB; the quality framework (Section 4)
Education-focused:	e.g. FEFC's inspection framework in *Assessing Achievement*; student charters for HE and FE

Locally set external standards are more likely to have been devised by the TEC or a guidance network. It is worth finding out what systems are currently in use, what progress has been made and whether contacts are interested in joining together to develop local solutions. Co-operation may be cost- effective, but services should consider if they are likely to be competitors in future. The case studies of MANCAT and AZTEC in Section 6 are examples of collaborative approaches.

Internally set standards

Often agencies have to respond to both internal and external pressures to develop a quality system and the systems may be different. For example a college guidance section may be linking into a college's overall TQM approach, but may also have to work to a TEC's BS5750 system in relation to a local Gateways to Learning scheme. Alternatively the guidance service may have to adapt an organisation's existing system that was not designed to meet guidance priorities.

Internal standards may be set by management, a staff quality group, a steering committee or a mixture of all three. It is important to consider who will monitor or evaluate the quality system; if their criteria do not mesh with the system locally developed, considerable time will have been wasted.

What resources are available?

As the quality cycle suggests, quality development is an iterative process and an assessment should be made of how much time is available to develop, implement and evaluate a system. Staff in the organisation or in external agencies may have a remit for quality development and could prove a useful source of expertise.

Many in the case studies (for example, North Yorkshire Careers Service) have used special funding to bring in external consultants. External advisers can add objectivity and a knowledge of quality systems and the experience of setting standards with a range of clients.

The costs of gaining accreditation under IIP or BS5750 are considerable and should be investigated carefully, particularly by small organisations.

Setting the standards

Your organisation's mission statement, policies or strategic plan can provide information on its aspirations and objectives, from which appropriate standards can be derived.

The quality framework (Section 4) groups standards under three headings:

Key principles - for example, confidentiality, which is likely to be a nationally agreed indicator of quality, for which the standard is 'absolute', that is, it must be present

Operational principles - for example, priority groups to target, for which the standard is locally determined

Organisational structure - for example, accountability, where the standards determine how the organisation reports to its users and funders

You may find the quality framework helps group the standards. It focuses more on the service delivery than the guidance interview itself; professional organisations and AGCLB focus more on this aspect.

Standards can also be derived by analysing examples of good practice and using these to identify key features of an activity that must be present to achieve quality. The Lead Bodies use this method of functional analysis to set the standards for industry on which NVQs are based (see Section 5). This can be done on a local level as the Manchester case study illustrates.

Questionnaires or interviews with users and potential users of the service can indicate what features are important to the clients and where improvement is necessary.

What is in place already?

Your guidance agency may already have service standards; there may be an unwritten professional commitment to quality, or standards that are rarely monitored or reviewed.

These may be located in job descriptions, client entitlements, contracts with funders, statements of intent, or even marketing materials. An audit which establishes the systems that you have in place and the areas which need to be covered will identify the gaps.

Existing standards from the national and local sources already identified can be adapted. It may seem easier to buy into a ready made system, but the standards may not be appropriate to the agency. Any standards internally devised should be:

- relevant;
- measurable;
- clear to those who have to meet them.

Whole- or part-agency standards?

Resource constraints may mean prioritising which aspects of the service to focus on. The case study of Dudley Educational Guidance Service illustrates how they used the staff development section of the quality framework as a starting point.

Areas can be highlighted in turn as part of a strategic plan for developing quality standards across the service; this supports a policy of continuous improvement as well as enabling a review of the stages of implementing the quality system.

It may be the service has to respond to government, local TEC and other funders' initiatives which prescribe specific areas. This does not mean that their system cannot be applied to other areas of activity considered important. There is a danger of a two-tier service if quality criteria are only applied to what external agencies deem important; for example, only introducing a quality system for clients receiving TEC guidance credits.

Who should set the standards?

It is vital that everyone in an agency understands and owns the standards if they are to be integrated effectively into the provision offered. A cross-agency working group, with representation from staff at all levels, steering group members, users of the service and both internal and external customers will mean that the standards are more likely to be achieved.

If standards are externally set then it is important to involve all staff in the implementation/monitoring/evaluation/resetting cycle. Feedback on external standards and their relevance will also be extremely useful to the funders and national agencies which set them.

Careful thought needs to be given to ensuring coherence if different quality standards are being applied internally for various funders. Data collection systems need to be streamlined to reduce administrative costs and unnecessary duplication.

Developing performance targets

Quality audits provide the baseline for the measurement of performance and the setting of targets by asking:

Where are we now in relation to the standards? Where do we want to be in the short term and in the long term? What targets will ensure we get there?

It is preferable to set targets which are achievable, and then reset them the following year, than set unattainable goals. The case study of Oaklands College illustrates targets as part of a three-year plan for improving the range and quality of guidance services.

Staff should be involved at various stages in the setting of targets; they can take part in the initial audit, or comment on targets set by steering groups, managers or external agencies. The case study of Dudley EGSA illustrates how all staff can be involved in setting personal and organisational targets.

Devising performance measures

How will performance be measured?

It will be easier to set quantitative measures than qualitative measures - the challenge is to include a balance. The quality framework (Section 4) contains suggestions for both.

It is crucial to measure appropriate activities, rather than activities that are easy to measure: 'It is important not to allow data on processes (like the number of sessions a guidance centre is open) to substitute for data on outcomes for users (which is the real test of quality).' (*The Quest for Quality* UDACE, 1991)

Instruments such as the Measurement of Guidance Impact are now being developed 'to provide objective information which helps TECs and guidance agencies evaluate the effectiveness and monitor the learning outcomes that have arisen from adult guidance programmes and interventions.' (NFER, 1993)

In guidance agencies a wide range of data about performance is collected every day as part of routine activity. These include client statistics, annual accounts, and policy statements. The same data can be used many times for different purposes - once collected it can be analysed and presented to demonstrate achievement of a wide range of standards.

It is important to recognise that the performance measure may not be precise, however objective one tries to be; it may only give an indicator of performance, but can still be useful in comparing relative performance over a period of time or in relation to national standards and indicating areas requiring further attention.

Establishing the monitoring systems

Which activities should be monitored?

Decisions have to be made on how much staff time and funding is devoted to monitoring the quality of the service. Staff will have to be trained to collate appropriate evidence, and to interpret it as objectively as possible.

Most guidance agencies have more clients than they are staffed to deal with, and find it very difficult to give up time from their core business. But unless this is done the quality may deteriorate and the services may be targeted inappropriately. Systems therefore have to be implemented so that monitoring becomes a regular routine task. Decisions have to be made on how this is integrated into other activities, who undertakes it and who has responsibility for ensuring it is completed.

External and internal systems should be meshed together as smoothly as possible. Sampling a number of users, or surveying all users for a limited period, rather than blanket questionnaires to all clients can provide sufficient information. Getting it 'right first time', as the TQM philosophy espouses, is more efficient than placing the energy in checking and correcting mistakes. Monitoring therefore has to be an ongoing process.

Evaluation

Once the evidence has been collated it can be used to see how far standards have been achieved and targets have been met. Reasons for success or failure in meeting targets can be identified. Areas for improvement can be prioritised and action plans drawn up.

Guidance services will have to consider who will be involved in the evaluation process - this may be external inspectors or funders or a quality manager in a larger organisation. It is valuable if internal evaluation can also be undertaken regularly and objectively.

Managers must decide to whom (including staff, service users, and the local network) the results of the evaluation will be disseminated. Before this stage is reached, decisions must be made on how failures to meet targets are to be handled.

Evaluation includes not only the collation, interpretation and dissemination of the information on the quality of the service, but a consideration of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the quality system itself.

Resetting of standards and targets

The final stage in the quality cycle is the resetting of targets and standards. Once the evaluation is complete it will be necessary to consider whether the targets and standards were appropriate, and how far the agency has made progress in improving its quality.

All guidance services will benefit from an annual audit of quality to examine how well the processes of quality assurance and quality control are working. As part of this regular review, targets will need to be revised and new targets identified in line with the strategic plan. The agency may take the opportunity to consider new quality priorities, and revise its existing standards in line with changes in its functions, client group or relation with other agencies.

Section 4

The **quality framework**

The quality framework

Introduction

Following the publication of the *Quest for Quality in Educational Guidance for Adults* (UDACE,1991), it was decided to test its quality framework. It was piloted with a small number of agencies and institutions, already committed to reviewing the quality of their services, and broadly representative of the range of those working within educational guidance. Those involved in developing other approaches to quality assurance, such as BS5750, TQM or participating in initiatives, such as Gateways to Learning, were also encouraged to consider the framework in relation to these.

An initial visit was made in Spring 1992 by the consultants to the participating agencies, to:

- review their internal developments thus far in the field of quality;
- receive views on the quality framework and assess its applicability to their service;
- select a strand of the framework, which the agency would pilot within its service while the consultants supported a systematic approach to the development of quality assurance systems, levels of resourcing for small services were likely to mean that the framework would have to be implemented over a longer period of time than that envisaged for this piece of work.

A variety of approaches to the piloting of the framework was taken by the agencies involved, including:

- focusing on human resources and staff development;
- concentrating on reviewing the delivery system for an information centre;
- the development of feedback systems;
- taking a broader view, and, with the assistance of a quality development manager, reviewing service delivery and information systems, together with organisational structures and policies.

Feedback on the framework indicated that agencies considered it to be a very useful tool when reviewing their own quality standards. It was also noted that:

- some aspects are very hard to measure reliably;
- quality means different things to different people;
- some readers would have preferred more assistance to understand the framework;
- the framework does not cover the guidance process itself - although other tools already existing and being developed are attempting to measure the quality of the guidance process;
- some agencies were feeling an increasing tension between client- centredness and meeting the demands of their funders to achieve certain outcomes;
- while many supported the principle that guidance should be free of charge to the individual user, the reality was that individuals or employers were increasingly likely to have to contribute towards the cost of the guidance.

At a seminar held in July 1992 the pilot agencies suggested some revisions to the framework and identified the need for a quality pack as a practical starting point. The updated framework which is offered as one model which agencies may wish to adapt to their requirements. The case studies of AZTEC and Dudley in Section 6 illustrate how networks of independent and institution-based services have used the framework to derive local standards and measures.

Part 1: Key principles

Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/ Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Client-centredness	Must be present and demonstrated by: Ethos of service as presented to and experienced by user(s) Development and practice of decision making skills by user(s) in relation to their own learning Achievement of personal and learning outcomes by user(s)	User feedback - records of informal comments. - evidence from follow-up surveys of users. Individual users: - evidence of impact of service on e.g. ability to make effective decisions about learning; subsequent participation in learning programmes; other personal outcomes. Other users: - e.g. satisfaction with information, staff development or other services provided; evidence of change effected as a result. Evidence of advocacy activities on behalf of users. Evidence of referral to other agencies whenever appropriate. Evidence of staff working towards and achieving appropriate occupational standards. Evidence that management/funders of service do not seek to predetermine outcomes for users or groups of users. See also Impartiality.	Individual case studies. Reports of other agencies. See also: Oakeshott (1991) Section 2.1 NICEC/ED (1991) Sections 3.1, 3.2
Impartiality	Must be present.	Agency/service records of: - user characteristics; - options suggested; - referrals to providers and other agencies; - advocacy activities; - feedback activities. Examination of agency records to detect possible skewing towards particular outcomes e.g. disproportionate numbers of users referred to a single provider or programme.	Publicity material, public stance. Involvement in local networks with a focus on adult learners rather than providers. Public perception of impartiality. Evidence that information on the full range of learning options is displayed/researched/discussed as appropriate.. See also: Oakeshott (1991) Section 2.1 NICEC/ED (1991) Section 1.3
Confidentiality	Must be present.	Public stance: statements in publicity material, existence of or support for a code of practice. Documented organisational practices - contract agreed with individual clients; - procedures agreed with network partners and referral agencies; - secure record-keeping systems.	Surveys of user satisfaction. See also: Oakeshott (1991) Section 2.1 NICEC/ED (1991) Section 1.1

Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/ Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Commitment to equal opportunities for all users and staff	Must be present.	Agency/service records - user characteristics and user profile. - evidence of targeting disadvantaged groups. Written policy statement. Equal opportunities training for all staff. Staffing profile.	Equal opportunities policy for own staff. User feedback. Agency ethos and style. See also: UDACE (1986) p.36-37. DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Principle 2. Oakeshott (1990) Section 2.1.
Commitment to the definition, principles and activities of educational guidance for adults	Must be present.	Written statements in policy, mission statements, aims and objectives, and publicity. Incorporation of principles and activities into staff training programmes. Evidence of participation in regional and national educational guidance networks.	User perceptions. Perceptions of funding bodies. Recognition by external bodies as conforming to principles of good practice. See also: UDACE (1986) Rivis (ed) (1989) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) ICO (1990)
Accessibility	Must be present. Includes: a) Delivery points of services offered. b) Physical access to locations used. c) Social/ psychological/ linguistic access to guidance services.	a) Evidence of: siting of delivery points in relation to communities served; arrangements for and extent of outreach activity; balance of centre-based and non-centre-based activity. b) Evidence of facilities for physical access to delivery points: e.g. lifts, ramps. c) Evidence of: appropriate publicity and signposting, (eg use of community languages); free availability of services (see above); timings of service delivery flexible and appropriate to user groups; comfortable waiting areas, private interview facilities; easy telephone access, including multiple lines and answering machines with friendly message; appropriately trained reception staff; adequate staffing for volume of enquiries received; availability of interpreters and signers; childcare facilities (e.g. play area, creche).	a) Avoidance of intimidating premises eg large office blocks, offices in ill-lit, quiet areas. b) Friendly and welcoming (ie appropriately recruited and trained) staff. See also: UDACE (1986) p.74-77. Fiske (1989) Rivis (ed) (1989) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Principle 10. Oakeshott (1991) Sections 1.2, 1.4. NICEC/ED (1991) Section 1.2.
Initial guidance free of charge to the general public[1]	Must be present (see Accessibility, below)	Publicity material. Annual accounts. Socio-economic profile of users - proportions from lower/higher income groups. Note: Where agencies are considering charges for some aspects of their services e.g. psychometric testing. Careful monitoring of user profiles against earlier profiles will be needed to assess whether a 'two-tier' service is emerging. Similar measures will be needed if any kind of voucher scheme is introduced, in order to measure impact on all users and potential users i.e. to detect any skewing of services towards those most able to pay.	Public perception of service as freely available. See also: UDACE (1986) p44 NAEGA (1990) Principle 9 NICEC/ED (1991) Section 1.4

1. Although it is regarded by guidance specialists as an important principle that guidance is free of charge to users, this principle can no longer be regarded as universal. Some specialist services may be charged for and shortage of funding makes it increasingly difficult to provide other services free of charge.

Part 2: Operational principles

Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/ Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Priority groups/ targeting	a) Priority groups identified in line with policy and availability of resources. b) Targeting of particular services to priority groups eg outreach to unemployed people, information to business users. c) Achievement of balance between priorities in line with overall policy and resources.	a) Existence of policy documents and reports establishing priorities. Existence of appropriate monitoring systems. b) Records of activity with - individuals - groups - other agencies c) Comparison of work with different priority groups to ascertain under/overachievement of targets.	Accounts of outreach activity. Case studies of individuals and groups. Reports to LEA committees and other funding bodies **See also**: Fiske (1989) Rivis (ed) (1989) Oakeshott (1991)
Service delivery systems	Service delivery systems appropriate to range of users, within constraints of local policy, resources and existing organisational structures.	Evidence of : - selection of delivery systems appropriate to range of users and to priority groups identified eg centre-based, outreach, distance. - effective organisation and administration of service delivery systems: opening hours, drop-in sessions, appointments systems, outreach sessions, telephone links, referral to other agencies - all appropriately publicised and adhered to. - offer of a guaranteed level of service eg appointment within two weeks of first contact. - rate of use of different delivery systems, comparison with allocation of staff and other resources and continuous review of balance between activities in the light of demand and priorities. - mechanism for user comment/complaint about service delivery.	User comments. See also: UDACE (1986) p.37,40,44. Fiske (1989) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Principle 8. Oakeshott (1991) Section 2.1. NICEC/ED (1991) Section 1.2, 3.2, 4.4.

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Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/ Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Network development	Guidance agency in a) participates in and b) maintains an effective inter-agency guidance network.	a) Records of network activity - meetings, newsletters, training events, directories etc. Evidence of active participation in - referral, information exchange, publicity, feedback activities, staff development, monitoring and evaluation - through agency/network records, existence of information and feedback exchange mechanisms. b) Evidence of role of guidance agency in co-ordinating and maintaining the network - communication systems, regular newsletters, compilation and up-date of directories. Allocation of staff time to network development, with appropriate support and training.	Evidence of good inter-agency working relationships - informal links, collaborative activities, invitations to participate in activities led by other agencies. Annual reports of other agencies. See also: UDACE (1986) p.39-50. Fiske (1989) Rivis (ed) (1989) Developing Networks Section (J Sadler) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) ICO (1990) Oakeshott (1991) Section 1.5. NICEC/ED (1991) Section 4.1, 4.2.
Information systems	Comprehensive, up-to-date, accurate information about learning opportunities for adults available to staff of agency, network and users, through a variety of print and technology based media.	Existence of: - comprehensive, up-to-date, accurate, accessible information databases on paper and/or computer. - appropriately trained staff. Regular in-service training programmes for all staff involved in information management. - network of agencies from whom information is collected systematically. - systems for data-collection, data checking and inputting/ collation/ filing/ storage. - appropriate retrieval systems for a) staff and b) users. - systems for monitoring a) information usage, b) quality and c) breadth of information. - information in a variety of media: leaflets and information sheets in appropriate styles and languages for portable computer systems (where appropriate); loan facilities for reference materials.	Appropriate presentation of information resources. Ease of use and accuracy of information as reported by users. See also: UDACE (1986) p.77-85 Fiske (1989) Rivis (1989) Information Management Section (L Ferguson) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) ICO (1990) Sections 2.1, 3. Oakeshott (1991) Section 1.5. NICEC/ED (1991) Section 3.3, 4.1. NEGI (forthcoming) Information in Educational Guidance
Staff development and training activities	All staff attained or working towards achievement of relevant occupational standards at appropriate level. Appropriate staff development and training programmes for a) all agency staff and b) staff of other agencies in the network.	Evidence of staff attainment in progress towards professional / qualifications / occupational standards. - staff development and training policies for a) staff and b) network staff. - appropriate resources allocation for staff development and training activities. - existence of a range of staff development programmes appropriate for different groups of staff. - evaluation of staff development programmes by participants.	Recorded levels of staff satisfaction. Improved performance of individual staff and agency as a whole. See also: UDACE (1986) p.88-91. Rivis (ed) (1989) Staff Development and Training (R Hawthorn and REdwards) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Principle 6. ICO (1990) Section 2.8. Oakeshott (1991) Section 1.3. NICEC/DE Section 4.5.

Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/ Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Advocacy activities	Advocacy on behalf of users undertaken where appropriate in order to empower learners to achieve their objectives in relation to education and training.	Existence of a commitment to impartial advocacy on behalf of users, as a means of empowering them, in policy statements and publicity. Evidence of: - appropriate staff training and support in advocacy strategies. - advocacy activity undertaken from service records, including negotiation with providers and funding bodies and representation of users'/clients' interests where appropriate e.g. discretionary awards panels. - impartiality of advocacy activity, regardless of guidance agency's own relationship with agency to whom representation is being made. - outcomes of advocacy activity and of changes being effected eg award of grant, barrier to access removed, study support improved. Existence of appropriate systems to enable effective feedback to take place using evidence from advocacy activities.	User feedback. Evidence of reputation of agency as an impartial advocate for its users. See also: Rivis (ed) (1989) Advocacy Section (C Neville) NAEGA (1990) ICO (1990) Oakeshott (1991) Section 2.1.10 NICEC/ED (1991)
Feedback activities	Ongoing, structured feedback to providers, funders and controllers of education and training for adults, in order to bring about change to meet the requirements of adult learners and other user groups.	Evidence of: - feedback strategy for the agency/network. - feedback systems and mechanisms including reporting systems, committee structures and channels of communication. - resources committed to feedback activity, including the time of appropriately trained and supported staff. - systematic collection of issues for feedback. Records of feedback activity undertaken. - outcomes of feedback activity, as shown in identifiable change in provision, structures or systems.	Other evidence of change in provision, structures or systems indirectly attributable to feedback activity. Evidence of development activities with other agencies eg advice on planning provision, contribution to staff development, advisory roles on policy committees. **See also:** Rivis (ed) (1989) Feedback Section (M Oakeshott) NAEGA (1990) Sections 15, 16. ICO (1990) Section 3.16. Oakeshott (1991) Work role 3 NICEC/ED (1991) Section 4.3
Publicity and promotional activities	Publicity for services offered appropriate to all potential users, including promotional activities to support the development of learning opportunities.	Existence of a publicity strategy/policy. Existence of publicity leaflets and materials in appropriate formats and language(s) for different user groups. Evidence of: - effective distribution systems for publicity materials. - use of non-print media for publicity and promotion, including visual and telecommunications media. - of public awareness of services offered - volume of demand for services over time, pattern of annual cycle of demand, relationship between publicity campaigns and demand.	General awareness of existence of agency/network and its services. See also: Rivis (ed) (1990) Information Management (L.Ferguson)

Part 3: Organisational structures

Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Policy framework	Must be present.	Existence of: - policy document, mission statement, aims and objectives. - policy and planning process. - implementation strategy linked to policy and planning process. Policy reflected in 'Users' Charters' or guarantee of service.	Extent of dissemination of policy. Extent of user awareness of policy. See also: Rivis (ed) (1989) Organisation and Management Section (V Rivis) DES (1989) ICO (1990) Section 3.1. Oakeshott (1991) Section 1.1.
Resources	Availability of resources adequate for the range and type of services offered and for the volume of demand for those services.	Evidence of: - policy statements underpinning allocation of resources to provision of services. - volume and demand for services offered or planned. - priorities and operational policies affecting resource requirements eg outreach to target groups, development of computerised information systems. - staffing levels and associated costs required to deliver service in line with policy. - capital and revenue costs e.g. premises, administration. - other operational costs - direct guidance services to users and network development, advocacy, feedback, training. - properly costed budget, including identification of 'absorbed' or 'hidden' costs. - allocation of funds sufficient to meet costs. - financial systems, accounting and auditing procedures. - appropriate use of human resources - including recruitment, selection, induction and development of all staff. - effectiveness of service at given levels of resource and demand. - mechanisms to increase levels of resource in line with demand whilst adhering to all other principles of good practice i.e. impartiality, freely available.	All other indicators of quality. See also: UDACE (1986) Rivis (ed) (1989) Resources Section (J Sadler) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Principle 2. Oakeshott (1991) Work Role 1.

Principle/ Feature	Quality Standard	Direct/Indirect Measurement	Qualitative Evidence
Organisation/ management structures	Appropriate structures for organisation and management which support the delivery of services in line with the overall policy framework and which provide for both accountability and the assurance of quality.	Existence of: - a policy framework, linked to an operational strategy. - an agreed management structure which is appropriate to a public service operating within an interagency network. - clear documented roles for a) line management of staff and b) management/advisory steering committee(s) and agreed demarcation of responsibilities. - an organisational structure which is flexible enough to adapt to changing external circumstances and which ensures quality. Evidence that organisation and management structure is delivering the services for which it is responsibile. - mechanisms for accountability to a) users, b) funders and c) public and external bodies - responsible for oversight of activities. - mechanisms for staff support, development and appraisal within an overall quality system.	Internal/external feedback on: Good working relationships within the agency. Good working relationships with other agencies. Good reputation of agency for delivering educational guidance to adults. See also: UDACE (1986) p.57-59. Fiske (1989) Rivis (ed) (1989) Organisation and Management (V Rivis) and Resources (J Sadler) Sections DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Oakeshott (1991) Work Role 1
Accountability	Agency is adequately accountable to a) its users, b) its funders and c) the general public/external evaluators for the quality of the services it provides and for the resources it uses.	Existence of: - a mechanism for regular written reports to funding agencies and local committees. - financial accounting and audit systems with appropriate safeguards and supervision. - different methods of accountability to local users - annual reports, AGM, open days, newsletters. Evidence of : - interagency involvement in management/ advisory committees. - evidence of user involvement in management/advisory committees.	See also: Rivis (ed) (1989) Organisation and Management (V Rivis) Resources (J Sadler), Monitoring and Evaluation (V Rivis) Sections DES (1989) Oakeshott (1991) Section 1.7.
Quality systems	The quality of services provided is ensured by effective quality systems and strategies appropriate to local circumstances, with provision for the establishment of local standards within an overall framework recognised by other agencies providing a similar service and by the users of those services.	Evidence of: existence of a quality strategy, involving one or more approaches or systems. - identification of user requirements in pursuit of quality e.g. regularly reviewed 'Users' Charters'. - involvement of all staff in ensuring quality. - appropriate systems for setting of standards, monitoring performance, evaluation and review of performance, further action to improve performance. - specific systems for monitoring: a) characteristics and requirements of service users; b) agency response/services offered; c) short term outcomes for users; d) longer term outcomes for users; e) other outcomes, including changes in priorities for service delivery.	Users perceive continual improvement in services offered and delivered. See also: UDACE (1986) p.91-93 Rivis (ed) (1989) Monitoring and Evaluation Section (V Rivis) DES (1989) NAEGA (1990) Oakeshott (1991) Sections 1.5, 1.7, 2.1. NICEC/ED (1991) Section 1.6.

Section 5

Quality & training

Quality and staff competence

Links between quality standards, competencies, accreditation and staff development

There is sometimes confusion over the use of the word 'standards', because interest in quality standards for industry and the service sector has developed alongside the setting of standards of competence for staff in different occupations. This section outlines the current position on occupational standards for guidance workers and gives information on opportunities for training.

National standards are determined by industry lead bodies comprising representatives from particular occupational areas who agree standards for the work of individuals in their sector. These are expressed as statements of competence which are then grouped together as qualifications, and are also sometimes used as a basis for job descriptions and staff appraisal. It is sometimes assumed that assessing staff for competence ensures a quality system for an organisation. Assessing competence will provide evidence of the effectiveness of individual staff, but it will not cover quality issues across the organisation as a whole.

Standards in a quality system should cover all aspects of an organisation's work. Part of this system will focus on the competencies of staff, which may be measured by assessment and accreditation. Part of the system will need to focus on staff development, i.e. the system by which individual staff have opportunities to further their personal and professional development.

Because of the rapid changes in the contexts in which guidance is delivered, and in education, training and employment in which guidance is offered, continuing staff development needs to be firmly established on employers' agendas. The introduction of a quality system may well identify the need for staff development in particular areas.

Advice, Guidance and Counselling Lead Body

AGCLB was set up in October 1992 to undertake the development of national standards and support incorporation of those standards into qualifications accredited by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC).

This Lead Body has five segments whose membership reflects the main areas in which advice, guidance and counselling are practised:

- business enterprise;
- care and health;
- counselling and counselling services;
- education, training and work;
- support and advisory services.

An ethics and equality group is working on how ethical standards and equality of opportunity can be built into quality standards. Psychotherapy will be added at a later date.

The Standards Development Project has been under way since April 1993. Its purpose is to develop occupational standards for practitioners in advice, guidance and counselling which express clearly what a competent practitioner is able to do:

- the kind and level of performance expected;
- the scope or range over which the practitioner is expected to perform;
- the knowledge and understanding that underpins the practitioner's work.

The project has drafted standards for consultation; an outline of these is included as an appendix to this section. They are being tested in field trials in 1994 and a revised version will be formulated into National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs).

A number of central themes have emerged during this work. These include essential skills, the value base (i.e. anti-discriminatory), and the code of ethics (e.g. commitment to client self-determination, and concern for an acceptance of the essential value of the client).

The project has attempted to identify both the essential and discrete functions of advising, guiding and counselling, and also any additional functions (e.g. befriending, mentoring, mediation, advocacy) needed in order to provide an adequate skills mix appropriate to the variety of contexts in which practitioners work. Standards will consists of generic units, which apply to all fields in advice, guidance and counselling, and specialist units which meet the needs of some groups but not others.

Developments in the training and accreditation of guida. ce workers

Educational and vocational guidance work with adults takes place in a wide range of contexts. For some workers, guidance is their main activity, for others it is part of their job. Training needs for this diverse group of workers vary according to the work context, role and client group. Accreditation needs to be flexible, motivating and rewarding achievement rather than creating barriers to entry or progression.

It is expected that NVQs/SVQs will, for the first time, provide co- ordinated accreditation for guidance workers. Meanwhile there have been a number of developments in accreditation and training provision.

The main existing qualification in the field is the Diploma in Careers Guidance. Developments, including modular courses, part-time and distance learning, and APL, have started to make the provision more accessible to adult guidance workers outside the careers service. It is expected that these developments will accelerate as all the careers services are privatised between 1994 and 1997; ED guidelines for providers stipulate that professional staff should be qualified to diploma level.

The RSA Certificate in Education and Training Guidance for Adults is a customer specific scheme, developed by a local centre, and accredited by RSA. It is now running in about 20 centres and will be developed as a national scheme following the production of standards by the Lead Body, probably at NVQ level 3. A diploma-level scheme (probably level 4) is under discussion.

There have been two attempts to identify competences in adult guidance predating the work of the Lead Body. The first was a project funded by UDACE and FEU which produced the report *Educational Guidance for Adults: Identifying Competences* in 1991, with a draft list of competences and discussion of the issues raised. The second development was conducted by the seven careers services in the south west, which produced standards for guidance workers, and assessment guidelines and specifications. The standards have been adopted by a number of TECs and used as part of the quality assurance systems, e.g. for Gateways to Learning projects. The standards are also currently being incorporated into a postgraduate diploma in Careers Guidance at the University of the West of England at Bristol.

A number of providers have developed comprehensive training programmes specifically for adult guidance workers. Some examples are: Luton University - a four step set of qualifications from RSA Certificate to Masters degree; University of Strathclyde - three qualifications from Certificate to MSc.

While provision of training and accreditation has been developed in a number of areas, often catering for specific target groups and contexts, the spread across the UK is uneven.

Accreditation of assessors and APL advisers for NVQs/SVQs

Most NVQ/SVQ assessment will necessarily be done by subject specialists, in workplaces, colleges and training providers. The 'generalist' adult guidance worker may have a role to play as adviser where the client is applying for accreditation of prior learning. Guidance is provides key support for the APL process; indeed gaining credit for prior learning and achievements can be seen as a continuation of initial of guidance.

The occupational standards for APL advisors and assessors have been developed by the Training and Development Lead Body (TDLB) and have generated great interest among guidance practitioners. The relevant sections are:

Area D	Evaluate the effectiveness of training and development	
Area D3	Assess achievement for public certification which has units:	
	D32	Assess candidate performance
	D33	Assess candidate using diverse evidence
	D34	Co-ordinate the assessment process
	D35	Verify the assessment process
	D36	Identify previously acquired competence

D36, sometimes called the Adviser Award is the most relevant for guidance workers. It has three elements:

D361	Help candidate to identify areas of current competence
D362	Agree an assessment plan with candidate
D363	Help candidate to prepare and present evidence for assessment

City and Guilds (C&G) state that the APL Adviser Award D36 'is designed for those concerned with helping others to identify existing competence and to assist them to present themselves for assessments. The role of the APL adviser is to advise but not to assess. An APL adviser could be a supervisor or a manager within an organisation, a college tutor, a careers officer or a person whose work role is specifically to guide and advise others towards vocational qualifications.'

While the APL assessor would have to have competence in the occupational area, and have or be working towards D32 and D33, the APL adviser could in theory be offering advice across a range of occupational areas. In that case there would need to be close liaison between the adviser and the assessor who would be assessing the candidate's portfolio.

Accreditation schemes are available from five awarding bodies: BTEC, C&G, Pitman Examination Scheme, the Institute of Training and Development and RSA.

Staff development: Investors in People

IIP has increased the potential for coherent staff development strategies in organisations. Guidance workers in TECs and TEC-contracted agencies, colleges and careers services are likely to come under these schemes, as organisations apply for the IIP standard.

The IIP standard has four principles which aim to improve an organisation's quality through developing its staff:

- commitment - an Investor in People makes a public commitment from the top to develop all employees to achieve its business objectives;
- planning - an Investor in People regularly reviews the training and development needs of all employees;
- action - an Investor in People takes action to train and develop individuals on recruitment and throughout their employment;
- evaluation - an Investor in People evaluates the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future effectiveness.

National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance

NACCEG (described in Section 2) will:

- provide strategic leadership in the field of guidance;
- act as a focal point for organisations representing professionals involved in guidance work and for other relevant stakeholder organisations;
- provide advice for government and others;
- raise awareness of the importance of impartial guidance for learning and work.

As part of its work NACCEG will be advising on training and professional development in relation to all guidance provision. It could therefore have a major role to play in ensuring that a nationally recognised system of accreditation and staff development is established for guidance workers.

Contacts for information on:

RSA Certificate
Wolverhampton University
Walsall Campus
Gorway Rd
Walsall WS1 3BD

Tel: 0902-323233

South West Standards for guidance workers
TVEI Office
Sheldon School
Hardenhuish Lane
Chippenham
Wilts SN14 6HJ

Tel: 0249-443612

Lists of training courses

National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC)
CRAC
Sheraton House
Castle Park
Cambridge CB3 0AX

Tel: 0223-460227

Individual Commitment Branch
Employment Department
Moorfoot
Sheffield S1 4PQ

Training packs for adult guidance
The National Extension College
18 Brooklands Avenue
Cambridge CB2 2HN

Tel: 0223-316644

Replan 91
The Town Hall
Walkden Rd
Worsley
Manchester M28 4QE

Tel: 061-702 8700

See Section 2 for addresses of:
The Lead Body for Advice, Guidance and Counselling
Investors in People
The National Advisory Council for Careers and Educational Guidance

A.9 COLLECT, PROCESS AND MANAGE INFORMATION

A.9.1 Gather and update information
A.9.2 Interpret and provide information for use by others
A.9.3 Participate in inter-agency information networks
A.9.4 Manage client information
A.9.5 Design evaluate and modify information management systems

SPECIALIST UNITS

B.1 ENABLE CLIENTS TO ACCESS AND USE INFORMATION

B.1.1 Identify information required with the client
B.1.2 Structure the provision of information to meet client requirements
B.1.3 Enable client to develop own information gathering skills
B.1.4 Review use of information with client

B.2 OFFER ADVICE TO CLIENT

B.2.1 Identify a range of options with the client and explore their consequences for the client
B.2.2 Assist client to evaluate and select an option
N.B: Developments in hand to split B2 to distinguish between directive and non-directive advice

B.3 PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR PLANNING ACTION

B.3.1 Identify possible course of action
B.3.2 Enable client to decide upon a course of action
B.3.3 Plan the implementation of the course of action with the client
B.3.4 Monitor the outcomes of the chosen course of action

B.4 STRUCTURE SPECIFIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

B.4.1 Identify specific learning requirements and opportunities
B.4.2 Structure specific learning opportunities for individuals
B.4.3 Identify specific learning requirements in a group setting
B.4.4 Structure learning in a group setting

B.5 PREPARE AND CONTINUE THE REPRESENTATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

B.5.1 Gather information required to intervene on behalf of individuals
B.5.2 Identify a strategy for intervention

B.6 ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

B.6.1 Prepare documents and brief others on the case
B.6.2 Prepare an argument in order to represent an individual
B.6.3 Represent and support client in formal settings
B.6.4 Represent and support individuals and groups
B.6.5 Monitor the outcome of action

COMMON UNITS

A.1 ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE CLIENTS

A.1.1 Present the service to the client
A.1.2 Identify the client's initial requirements
A.1.3 Enable the client to determine the use they will make of the service(s) available
A.1.4 Establish communication with client
A.1.5 Identify client's concerns with the client

A.2 ESTABLISH WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CLIENTS

A.2.1 Agree the service to be provided
A.2.2 Agree contract and methods of working together
A.2.3 Assist client to identify issues and concerns

A.3 OPERATE WITHIN AGREED CODES OF PRACTICE

A.3.1 Ensure own practice is supported
A.3.2 Monitor own practice
A.3.3 Evaluate own contribution to agency and its objectives
A.3.4 Operate within a code of good practice
A.3.5 Use appropriate networks

A.4 MONITOR AND EVALUATE OWN WORK

A.4.1 Evaluate own practice
A.4.2 Ensure continued professional development
A.4.3 Evaluate own contribution to agency/agency objectives
A.4.4 Operate within an agreed ethical code of practice
A.4.5 Develop and maintain personal and professional networks
A.4.6 Manage own use of time

A.5 IDENTIFY, MONITOR AND REVIEW PROGRESS WITH THE CLIENTS

A.5.1 Assist clients to assess and agree her/his current stage of development
A.5.2 Assist client to monitor and review progress
A.5.3 Assist client to evaluate overall progress

A.6 DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN INTERACTION WITH CLIENTS

A.6.1 Develop interaction with client
A.6.2 Explore concerns with client
A.6.3 Bring interaction to an end

A.7 OPERATE REFERRAL PROCEDURES

A.7.1 Identify sources of referral
A.7.2 Refer clients to other sources
A.7.3 Receive referrals from other sources

A.8 MANAGE THE PROCESS OF REFERRAL

A.8.1 Identify sources of referral
A.8.2 Establish appropriateness of referral
A.8.3 Refer clients to other sources
A.8.4 Monitor process and outcomes of referral
A.8.5 Receive referrals from other sources
A.8.6 Provide feedback to referring source

B.7 NEGOTIATE WITH INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND AUTHORITIES

B.7.1 Set up a framework of negotiation
B.7.2 Present offers and rejections
B.7.3 Evaluate offers and rejections
B.7.4 Monitor the outcome of the negotiation

B.8 ENSURE A STRUCTURED COUNSELLING SETTING

B.8.1 Establish boundaries of professional relationship
B.8.2 Facilitate a mutual overview of relationship
B.8.3 Establish the counselling contract

B.9 ESTABLISH THE COUNSELLING RELATIONSHIP

B.9.1 Enable client to identify concerns
B.9.2 Enable client to work through concerns
B.9.3 Practitioner monitors client's change
B.9.4 Monitor the counselling process by the practitioner
B.9.5 Bring counselling process to an end

B.10 MONITOR SELF WITHIN COUNSELLING PROCESS

B.10.1 Differentiate between own internal world and that of the client
B.10.2 Monitor own effect on the client
B.10.3 Identify own theoretical orientation and its implication on the counselling process
B.10.4 Ensure continuing self support and supervision

B.11 PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO OTHER PARTIES

B.11.1 Devise a strategy for feedback to other parties
B.11.2 Identify types of information to be fed back to other parties
B.11.3 Ensure mechanisms for feeding back information to other parties are in place
B.11.4 Feedback information to other parties

Further Areas/Units under Development:

Mediation - Marketing of Service - Mentoring - Working with Colleagues - Coaching - Supervision - Advocacy - Evaluation and Quality Auditing - Advice (Directive and Non-Directive).

MANAGEMENT UNITS

C.1 SET AND MONITOR POLICY ON SERVICE PROVIDED

C.1.1 Develop policies for the service
C.1.2 Set up procedures for monitoring policy implementation

C.2 MANAGE THE SERVICE

C.2.1 Agree contract with stakeholder
C.2.2 Ensure Quality Assurance system is set up and operated
C.2.3 Ensure effective management of staff
C.2.4 Contribute to and make use of associated networks
C.2.5 Manage client information

POSSIBLE UNITS FROM OTHER LEAD BODIES

Management - Training and Development - Criminal Justice - Business Administration - Information Library Services - Small Business - Enterprise.

Section 6

Case studies

Case studies

Working from staff and organisational development plans

Case study - Dudley Adult Education Advice Service

Introduction

Dudley Adult Education Advice Service is an adult guidance service core funded by the local education authority, offering guidance from its main site in central Dudley and through a number of outreach sessions, including job centres.

The present staffing is six posts, one of which is job shared. The service generates some European Social Fund support.

The service took part in the original pilot of the UDACE quality framework in 1992. At that time the organisation was involved in a partnership programme with the local TEC and careers service and was about to take part in a Gateways to Learning project. The service had recently moved to new premises and was experiencing a rapid increase in demand for guidance.

The service was already recording guidance activity with clients in detail and had developed a sophisticated computerised client record system which was marketed nationally to other adult guidance services. The client database provided detailed information for service monitoring. In addition a proportion of clients were regularly followed up through questionnaires which provided information on client destinations and evaluation of the service they had received.

Approach to quality

While they were aware that most approaches would start with the delivery of the guidance service to clients or client entitlement, the organisation decided to begin implementing a quality system in the area of human resources and staff development.

This focus was chosen because the organisation was at that time reviewing its annual development plan and re-allocating roles across the staff team. The role of co-ordinator within the service was new. Line management and supervision systems were evolving. The organisation aimed to involve all staff in negotiating the quality system, rather than imposing it from above, in order for it to be effective.

Other organisations in the partnership were beginning to set up quality systems which would impact on the guidance service in the future. The guidance service was keen to develop its own priorities and performance indicators before being required to conform to standards set by an external organisation.

Standards development

Standards were derived during a process of development planning which was carried out at the level of the organisation and with each staff member. The process had a number of stages:

1. Priorities identified for development of the service as a whole
2. Development activities costed and matched against budget
3. Organisational development plan agreed
4. Revised work roles of existing staff identified
5. Work roles matched against organisation's development plan and areas of overlap revised; gaps identified for vacant post
6. Individual development plans negotiated with staff, with work targets and criteria for evaluation
7. Staff development / training requirements identified

The outcome of the process was that individual staff had their own development plans which set targets to implement the organisational plan. All staff were involved in the planning stages through staff meetings and individual interviews. Individuals set their own targets and evaluation criteria. They reviewed progress using the evaluation criteria with input from the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator underwent the same process with evaluation input from another member of staff.

The system of evaluation had a number of benefits:

- while focusing on staff it in fact covered all areas of service activities;
- the service was able to set realistic targets and prioritise them;
- it was designed and owned by all staff;
- it made use of the different approaches and skills of staff;
- staff increased their awareness of each other's roles;
- staff development needs were identified and linked to the development plans;
- staff were able to manage individual aspects of the service, enabling personal career development.

This approach to quality highlighted the need for the organisation to have clear aims and policy. It required time for staff discussion, individual interviews and to assimilate and process ideas.

The first year of this process was successful, and a second set of meetings was set up to review priorities for the service, agree individual plans and targets for the following year, and inform the staff team of the individual plans.

The service was a guidance provider in the Gateways to Learning programme between August 1992 and April 1993. Organisations were required to set up quality systems; a handbook with expected quality standards was provided by the TEC, and organisations were inspected for audit purposes. The service was able to demonstrate that it had systems in place which met the requirements of several aspects of the audit. This was of great benefit to the service during this phase.

The service is now entering a new situation as the Black Country area, including Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, has been nominated as one of the Pathfinder areas for the privatisation of the careers service. This development has superceded the Dudley Guidance Partnership. The service will continue to be funded by the local authority for the foreseeable future and hopes to be working closely with the new Black Country Careers Service in the non-core adult provision.

Documentation produced by the guidance service

Client record database - leaflet describing the system
Format of individual staff interviews
Generic job description for advice staff
Individual development plan pro forma
Examples of development plans

Examples of TEC quality guidelines reproduced with the permission of Dudley TEC.

For further information, contact:

The Co-ordinator
Dudley Adult Education Advice Service
Ashleigh House
Ednam Road
Dudley DY1 1HL

Tel: 0384-453150

Adult education advice worker

Job description

1. To provide advice and guidance to adults about all issues relating to education, training and careers

2. To provide that guidance on a drop-in basis, by appointment, by telephone and by outreach

3. To provide group guidance when appropriate

4. To work within a policy of equal opportunities, promoting equality of opportunity in education, training and employment for clients

5. To work within a network of agencies providing guidance, education, education, training and related services

6. To work within a confidential service, and clarify the confidential service, and clarify the confidentiality with clients

7. To assist in the feedback to providers and others of well-met and inappropriately met needs of clients

8. To record all work with clients in agreed form

9. To be involved in other duties as outlined in personal development plan

Format of individual development interview

1. Background to exercise

2. Explanations of
- staff/team model each person co-ordinating substantial area of work;
- drawing up individual plan and evaluation criteria;
- team meetings for cohesion;
  staff development implications and dissemination of training
- knowledge;
- evaluation model

3. Discussion of what individual would like to do/feel possible to do

4. Drawing up of next steps: rough draft of weekly duties and outline development action

5. Verbal evaluation of interview

6. Arrangement of meeting to discuss progress

DEVELOPMENT PLAN - INFORMATION OFFICER

AIM	METHOD	MEASUREMENT/EVIDENCE	DATE	REVIEWED BY
Resources				
Ensure systems in place for regular updating of information	Review systems for sending for FE/HE prospectuses	Possible production of joint mailing list with Careers	Nov 92	
	Regularly contacting DMBC colleges for updated courses	Course Information	Termly	
	Stock editing Careers information	All information over 2 yrs old replaced	Feb 93	
Accessibility of service to clients	Review signposting of service within building (in consultation with colleagues)	Permanent hallway signs New window poster	Oct/Nov 92	
	Review layout of resource area to accommodate new reception area	Establishment of reception area	Oct 92	
Ensure materials are easily retrieved	Relabelling resource boxes where necessary. Ensuring shelf guides clear, easy to use.	Clearly labelled resources.	Mar/Apl 93	
Identifying gaps	Major gaps identified as part of stock editing exercise, information audit & consultation with staff.		Ongoing	

AIM	METHOD	MEASUREMENT/EVIDENCE	DATE	REVIEWED BY
Investigate ways of developing information systems within the Partnership	Attendance at Information Group meetings. Carrying out information audit, identifying gaps and examining ways forward	Information audit, minutes, other	Ongoing	
Establishing links with new information staff in colleges	Contacting staff as part of information collection process/possible visits		Dec 92 Apl/May 93	
Management of Client Information				
Review systems for:-				
client record keeping	Review client record form taking into account baseline info needed by Partnership & TecFutures	Decision re merging info into one form or using separate systems. Forms.	Nov/Dec 92	
	Investigate ways of developing client record database			
follow up	Monitoring existing system - consultation with staff	Feedback from staff	Dec/Jan 93	
	Investigate possibility of longterm questionnaire	Long term form. Follow up returns.	Feb/Mar 93	
security of records	Define system re paperbased computerised files - how kept/responsibility/who has access?	Lockable cabinets Data Protection	Jan/Feb 93	

AIM	METHOD	MEASUREMENT/EVIDENCE	DATE	REVIEWED BY
housekeeping	Decisions on how long records kept, how disposed of, by whom	Removal of obsolete records	Jan/Feb 93	
Raising staff awareness of systems	Team meetings/memos etc	Informed staff	asap after systems altered/established	
retrieval of statistical information	Determining what statistical info is needed, who for, how often. Ensure system in place to enable one-off requests to be dealt with.	Production of stats	Initial brainstorming Dec 92. Reviewed Apl/May 93	
Financial				
Administration and monitoring of the budget, identifying needs and taking appropriate steps	Regular meetings with service manager Liaison with AEAS staff	Financial files Acquisitions	Ongoing	
Publicity				
To ensure everyone on network is kept informed of publicity drives and regularly supplied with appropriate amount of AEAS publicity	Update mailing list from directory, old list, liaison with colleagues	Up to date mailing list	Nov 92	
	Produce leaflet aimed at organisations about the service	AEAS leaflet for members of network	Nov 92	
	Circulate leaflet & letter to network re no of copies normally required	Business Reply Service returns from organisations	Nov/Dec 92	
	Blanket mailing of publicity	Examination of "Heard Via" stats - client record form	Dec 92?	

AIM	METHOD	MEASUREMENT/EVIDENCE	DATE	REVIEWED BY
Promote educational guidance by linking up with national events	Organise event/publicity for Adult Learners Week	Publicity leaflets/ event	Apl/May 92	
Investigate possibility of one-off events to promote AEAS and target specific groups/geographical areas	Research feasibility of follow up event to Adult Learners' Week possibly linked to target group/ specific geographical area eg Wren's Nest.	Mo contacting groups as part of outreach	Dec 92 -	
		possible event/publicity	May/Jun 93	
Investigate/review channels of publicity	Review entries in existing directories eg Thompsons, BCLIPS; alternative channels		Apl 93	
Production of Information Materials (with Mo)				
Updating existing AEAS produced materials to ensure information is kept up to date and accurate	Updating guidance directory	Directory	Dec 92	
	Updating information sheets eg teaching leaflet	Leaflet	As necessary	
Identifying/filling gaps for common enquiries	Consultation with colleagues		Feb/Mar 93	
	Production of materials as appropriate	Information sheets	Jun 93	
	Production of client directory	Client directory	Jan/Apl 93	
Improve quality of production of AEAS publications	Develop in-house style	Enhanced presentation of information sheets	Feb 93	

THE PROVISION OF ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

The Dudley Training and Enterprise Council (D TEC) will:

- *Before a contract is made, ensure that contractual obligations can be met by the Provider*
- *Supply new Providers with audit guidelines*
- *Work closely with Providers to ensure that they are able to reach the required standards within the timescale agreed in the contract*

The Provider will:

- *Identify and publish organisatio.. structures, authority levels, responsibilities, policies and procedures which reflect a strong commitment to the provision of a quality service and which meets the needs and expectations of the client group*
- *Maintain staff standards by identifying and regularly reviewing the training and development needs of all staff involved in advising, guiding and counselling clients on behalf of D TEC and for all staff in support roles*
- *Have a system which ensures conformance to all published policies, practices and procedures*

The Provider will:

- *Give advice, guidance and counselling services to the contracted levels, under controlled conditions and to a standard which meets the implied and stated requirements contained in the "Statement of Service"*
- *Have well established contacts with providers of further assessment which may be required to facilitate the provision of the service and which meets the standards laid down by D TEC*

The Provider will:

- *Have a procedure for measuring their own performance, highlighting areas for improvement not only in their own organisation but also in processes with which they interface*
- *Have a monitoring and review process for examining measured results to ensure that improvements are being made, that standards are being met and client needs satisfied*

The Provider will:

- *Have adequate documentation to fulfil the contract requirements and the needs of the client, with provision for the control and revision of documents*
- *Have a record keeping system which evidences at all times, the current situation in the provision of the service to individual clients while maintaining confidentiality and meeting the requirements of the data protection act*
- *Be able to supply accurate statistical information and ad-hoc reports reasonable requested by D TEC*

The Provider will:

- *Conduct internal audits to ensure that all elements of the quality policies, practices, systems and procedures are being adhered to and operating as intended*
- *Will have procedures which operate when non conformance is identified*

DATE OF AUDIT

QUALITY STANDARDS	
▸ The Quality System is established and documented	☐
▸ Standards for all aspects of the service provided are stated in clear precise and measurable terms	☐
▸ Performance in excess of the minimum standards is also measured and recorded	☐
▸ Responsibilities are clearly defined and staff are aware of them	☐
▸ All staff are aware of the quality audit procedures	☐
▸ All aspects of the service contracted are audited at least annually	☐
▸ A system is in use to consider and act upon client complaints, audit reports and suggestions for improvement	☐

QUALITY SYSTEM

The provider will have a system which ensures conformance to all published policies, practices and procedures.

- Quality standards are documented together with performance/conformance indicators
- All performance/conformance indicators are stated in clear, precise and measurable terms
- An internal audit system is in use and demonstrates adherence to the quality system
- The interval between audits, the manner of the audit and who will carry out those audits are clearly published
- Procedures exist, and are being applied, to deal with identified non conformance
- The system is designed to highlight where standards are being exceeded

STANDARDS SPECIFICATION REFERENCE BS 5750 PART 1/ISO 9001 CLAUSE 4.2

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

DATE OF AUDIT

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- Are up to date ☐
- Make clear the results on which the job holder will be judged ☐
- Are in the possession of the staff concerned ☐
- Reference copies are available ☐

PERFORMANCE PLANNING

- Training and development needs are discussed with the individuals concerned in a formal appraisal situation at least annually ☐
- Objectives and targets are set to measure individual performance ☐

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- A current training and development plan exists ☐
- All staff who work on the D TEC contract and who have been employed for more than six months are named in the plan ☐
- A budget exists to meet the priority needs contained in the plan ☐
- Priority training and development plans are being met ☐

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Provider will maintain staff standards by identifying and regularly reviewing the training and development needs of all staff involved in advising, guiding and counselling clients on behalf of D TEC and for all staff in supporting roles.

- Job descriptions are up to date, published standards exist for each job and staff are aware of them
- A staff appraisal system exists and staff are appraised regularly of how their performance is perceived
- Documentary evidence exists which identifies training needs and development plans
- A training budget exists and priority training needs are being met

STANDARDS SPECIFICATION REFERENCE BS 5750 PART 1/ISO 9001 CLAUSE 4.18

A multi-college approach to developing standards for threshold services

Case study - Manchester College of Arts and Technology

Introduction

MANCAT has 20,000 students (6,000 FTE). Guidance operates cross college via the Advice and Guidance Service, and also within departments. Because of the high number of students, the Advice and Guidance Service relies on a sound referral system, and refers both in college and externally to other guidance agencies and learning providers. The college is reviewing the integration of CATS and APL, and has identified a need to train all course tutors in guidance. They have also introduced individual action plans and are introducing learning agreements in 1993-4 for all students.

Under ED's National Development Programme, Manchester Training and Enterprise Council contracted MANCAT to lead a project involving all six of the colleges within the TEC area addressing the issue of quality in student threshold services. All institutes had been developing quality assurance systems, including BS5750 and TQM, but wished to work together to establish common and consistent standards, systems and procedures for quality assurance for threshold services. These were defined as:

- information giving;
- pre-learning programme advice and guidance;
- careers;
- initial diagnostic assessment facilities (including records of achievement and accreditation of prior learning);
- individual action planning;
- admissions and enrolment;
- induction.

Approach to quality

The college had developed BS5750 across five college departments, including the guidance element in the departments. Staff found BS5750 to be heavy on procedures, and difficult, albeit worthwhile, to apply to such diverse provision. To extend BS5750 across the college would mean applying it to such areas as open learning, HE construction, and black access courses. The work done on BS5750 was departmentalised and the college was keen to move towards cross-college initiatives for threshold services.

The Quality in Threshold Services project went through the following stages:

1. The six colleges carried out an audit of current provision. An audit document had been devised by the project team, which enabled them to collect comparable information on each aspect of threshold services e.g.:

Pre-learning programme advice and guidance
A. Are appropriate staff available to give initial/general advice and guidance on choosing a course:
a) during the day
b) in the evening
c) during holiday period

B. Are staffing/resources sufficient to meet the demand for advice and guidance during the periods identified in 1 and throughout the college centres?

The audit at MANCAT was carried out with heads of department,and they were asked to say to what extent the provision specified was available and to provide supporting evidence.

2. The standards were then set based on what the institution required to improve the current provision. Standards were practitioner-led, and linked to the college departments' annual operating statements. The framework used owes much to the strategic quality management model drawn up by Consultants at Work, and Sonia Inniss provided consultancy to the project.

The pro formas drawn up by the project agreed the standard and selected measure; individual colleges then identified the target set and the responsible person. These would then be monitored, a note made when the target was achieved, and this would be reviewed by an independent verifier.

The college is accountable to the student body, potential learners, other customers (e.g. employers and TECs), the governing body and FEFC for the quality of its provision. The standards and the targets are set through consultation, by the head of the Advice and Guidance Centre, the heads of department and the lecturing staff, and are monitored by the head of Advice and Guidance in conjunction with the head of Staff Development. Returns are evaluated by the vice-principal, the head of Advice and Guidance and the senior management. The college intends to operate the quality standards for threshold services scheme on a quality cycle basis, so that there will be a period of reviewing and if necessary resetting the standards and targets, after the first evaluation.

The quality process is ongoing: the college is moving towards setting up a formal structure for reviewing the targets set, and is committed to using the framework developed by the project. A national conference was held in July 1993, to disseminate the findings of the project.

MANCAT
City Centre Campus
Lower Hardman Street
Manchester
M3 3ER

Tel: 061-953 5995

Contacts: Vice-principal and Quality Standards for Threshold Services Project Manager; Co-ordinator of the Quality Standards for Threshold Services Project; and Head of Advice and Guidance

Documentation available: The Quality Standards for Threshold Services is available at £15; for £25 a PC disk is included.

QUALITY IN THRESHOLD SERVICES

THRESHOLD AREA: PRE-LEARNING PROGRAMME ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

	STANDARDS		SUGGESTED OUTLINE MEASURE	GUIDANCE NOTES
1.	The College provides client centred pre-learning advice and guidance on request (within a specified time scale).	1.1 1.2 1.3	Analysis of records Spot checks Client survey	Procedures for accessing objective advice and guidance will be individual to the institution and its sites/centres.
2.	Information provided is up-to-date, accurate, and appropriate to the client's needs.	2.1 2.2	Information is reviewed and up dated Client survey	
3.	There is an identifiable resource base with facilities for confidential advice and guidance interviews.	3.1 3.2	Check rooms/booths exist Appointment system exists	
4.	Trained and/or experienced staff are available to provide advice and guidance.	4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4	Check staff development records Check staff timetables Check appointment diaries Audit trail	

A cross-college approach to quality assurance

Case study - Harlow College

Introduction

Harlow College is a large FE college with 12,500 enrolments, spread across two sites in Harlow in Essex. Students of all ages pursue a range of study up to HND level in a variety of modes, including full-time, part-time and open learning.

The guidance offer within the college is comprised of three main elements:

- a careers education programme, within which a tailored input is delivered to course groups, the nature of which is determined by need. Full-time students have priority, but requests can be made for work with part-time course groups such as Access students, and the service is being expanded to meet the needs of part-time students;

- careers and educational advice and guidance provision, delivered through workshops or on an individual basis through pre-bookable interviews or on a drop-in basis through pre-bookable interviews or on a drop-in basis. The staffing includes an educational guidance worker, to whom course tutors can refer prospective students to discuss study options prior to enrolment, and careers officers. Enrolled students tend to drop in, while external customers arrange an appointment;

- welfare and personal counselling, delivered by six part-time counsellors, two of whom are full-time members of the department, and a welfare officer.

All students have an entitlement to use student services, and because of the commitment to widening access, a series of evening-based careers advice sessions are being offered aimed specifically at evening students.

The department is also developing a rolling programme of seminars to increase tutors' knowledge of HE, and is developing multi-media packages to deliver training for tutors.

Individual action planning (IAP) is being developed within the college, and the intention is that all students will in future have an individual action plan provided by the unit responsible for their enrolment. This is part of the key responsibilities of the director for part-time students.

The college's approach to quality assurance

In 1985-6, the college principal took a strategic decision to develop a quality framework for the college. An external consultant, John Miller, worked with the college staff in the following ways:

- formulating the quality strategy with the senior management team;
- working with course teams;
- acting as the keynote speaker at the annual staff conference in 1986, at which quality was the main theme.

The management team continuing to work on the quality framework for the college to evaluate aspects of the provision, set up a number of formal mechanisms, with a specific brief for quality being taken by the director of curriculum. A system of quality monitoring and evaluation was developed, incorporating formal organisational structures, such as the governing body, and departmental quality groups were established to monitor quality within their own area of work.

The philosophy being followed by the college is that of continuous improvement, and therefore has much in common with a TQM approach. The process for recognition as an Investor in People is also underway. The college will meet any external standards required by external funders and accrediting bodies, but is not convinced of the value of BS5750, given the cost of implementation and ongoing auditing, without any guarantee that the standards set by bodies, which achieve it, represent acceptable quality. Consequently the college is making a careful study of BS5750.

Data on student profile is collected at enrolment, and students are tracked. The college is also looking at ways of measuring value-added, and is undertaking developmental work with a cohort of A-level students.

Approaches to quality assurance used by the guidance section

Developing standards

A department group on quality was set up within student services, as in the rest of the college, which developed a series of quality statements for guidance and counselling in consultation with 12 staff at various levels of seniority, who could represent the stakeholders in the services, such as those responsible for school interviews, for adult education etc. The staff involved started by considering the quality characteristics of guidance and counselling, and developed a four-stage model addressing different phases of the learner experience (pre-course, enrolment and induction, in course guidance and counselling and exit) and based around:

- characteristics;
- standards emanating from the characteristics;
- measures;
- future actions (linking to the concept of continuous improvement).

This activity was funded through the internal staff development budget, but benefited from having been selected as one of the FEU colleges involved in developing a corporate approach to curriculum and strategic planning and choosing as its major themes adults and quality. The project affected the provision by giving the department a model, by which activities could be judged. Therefore when an information unit was established subsequently, the characteristic of accuracy of information had already been agreed and standards developed. The applicability of the model to students over 19 was also investigated with a group from various departments, whose student population was dominated by adults (e.g. Access, Professional and Managerial, Intensive Secretarial, ET scheme manager etc.) The intention is to translate it into language which is more user friendly and discuss it with groups of students.

Work is continuing to define how the standards can best be measured: the project has found that it is often relatively easy to measure unimportant indicators, but that more difficult to measure those that really matter.

The measurement of customer satisfaction

Harlow College developed Records of Achievement (ROAs) through the national pilot study in 1985, and the majority of full-time students produce an ROA by the end of their course. These include space for a student statement, which is a prime assessment vehicle. The student statement contains a number of prompts, responses to which give feedback on the kinds of guidance and advice that the students have had and indications of its quality. Data from the course profiles is being collected centrally at exit, and a system exists for course tutors to feed information about student progresses and destinations to this central point. It is hoped to follow students up three months after they leave the college and to set up an alumni association.

The course profiles completed by course tutors/section heads also containing a significant section on the student profile, including aggregated data on progression, exit destinations, attendance, and successful completion.

It has been agreed that the time taken to enrol should not exceed 30 minutes for 80% of the students and a sample of students' experience of enrolments is being collected, analysed and the findings fed back to the academic board and other specific task groups (e.g. admissions and enrolment).

Staff competence and training

Staff are expected to have recognised qualifications for their area of work, where these exist. A number of staff giving information and advice would benefit from tailored training provision, which should emerge as NVQs are established.

Each department, unit or section within the college has to produce a three- year development plan, the objective of which have to be matched against the college's business plan. One of the strategic objectives within the plan concerns the provision of high-quality advice and guidance, and each department is assessing this in relation to its own training needs.

Documentation available

Documentation on the work undertaken by Harlow College is available, including examples of standards. Contact Head of Student Services at the address below.

Harlow College
College Square
The High
Harlow
Essex CM20 1LT

Tel: 0279-441288
Fax: 0279-420139

A comprehensive college policy in which customer satisfaction plays a key role

Case study - Oaklands College

Introduction

Oaklands College is one of the largest FE colleges in the country, with four main campuses and 10 other sites across Hertfordshire. The college offers several hundred learning programmes and approximately 47,000 places (approximately 8,000 FTEs), delivered through a variety of modes of study, including full-time and all kinds of part-time and drop-in.

Guidance is delivered in different ways, by a range of staff and at different stages in the learning process. Pre-entry guidance is delivered by a team of guidance and information staff, who support and advise course tutors and Hertfordshire Careers Service in the delivery of guidance and advice on course and at exit. Specific clients can be referred to the guidance team, who will also assist individual students to identify HE and other options.

A number of guidance-related learning programmes/courses are run by the college, including Back to Work, aimed at women returning to paid work, and funded through the European Social Fund.

The guidance and information team cover the different college sites and include:

- a team of helpline officers giving front-line information to the public who call or telephone;
- ten guidance staff (seven to eight full-time equivalents), who undertake a range of guidance activities, and advise on options both within the college and further afield.

The college is involved in Gateways to Learning and Skillchoice projects and the TEC has also funded other guidance-related projects, including one looking at the needs of the local Bangladeshi community.

Approach to quality assurance

The assistant principal has overall responsibility for curriculum, staff development and quality. A quality development manager was appointed in September 1992.

A quality management team (QMT) with representation from the was set up in 1990. This team developed the college's policy on quality, which focuses on:

- customer needs and negotiating these;
- setting standards;
- monitoring and evaluation.

The policy was discussed by the college's senior management and staff. The college worked with an external consultant to consider the kind of quality systems which needed to be established across the college as a whole.

Aware of the importance of planning for quality, the QMT, in liaison with the programme teams, decided the areas which should be monitored, and developed a sophisticated data collection and monitoring system, whereby data is aggregated and analysed by the quality development manager, making use of latest technologies (e.g. optical mark readers) and a summary report provided for programme teams. The latter are then encouraged to take appropriate remedial and development action, as required. In addition, a summary of quality across the college is prepared from this data, and disseminated.

Work is continuing to:

- embed the approach to quality into other college policies;
- develop procedural guidelines;
- develop processes for monitoring developmental action, required to be taken as a result of data monitoring and analysis.

The college is also investigating the relevance of BS5750 to its operations, and looking to integrate the requirements of external funders and validating bodies with the requirements of BS5750. In relation to staff competence, a personal development and review system is already in place, together with a supporting management training programme, which reflects the TQM philosophy of taking internal customer needs into account: an approach which the college is trying to encourage. In relation to IIP, an initial survey to assess the college against the IIP standard has taken place and an action plan has been prepared. The senior management have communicated the college strategic plan to staff.

Because of the diversity of the ways in which the guidance available is funded and delivered, it is necessary to collect and analyse different types of data for the varying services and products.

The college's quality development manager trained guidance staff in the quality process, including identifying performance indicators (PIs), collecting data against which to measure these, and disseminating the results.

It has been necessary to develop ways of capturing data to link into the college's internal systems, provide feedback on customer satisfaction and facilitate student tracking.

Aspects of guidance are covered in some of the questionnaires being used to assess the quality of the student experience.

An initial contact questionnaire is used to sample client perceptions, e.g. over the three weeks up to and including enrolment and is analysed to give data on:

- the profile of clients contacting the college (ethnic origin; gender; age etc.);
- impressions of first contact with the college;
- the nature of information provided and extent to which it met needs.

Clients are encouraged to select adjectives to describe the service. Results are collated by the quality development team and fed back. A guidance questionnaire has been developed, and is being used spasmodically. This aims to give feedback on whether the guidance interview met the clients' aims; activities undertaken during the guidance process; and any outcomes from the process. An accessibility questionnaire produces data on a number of issues relating to access, including from where guidance received came, how helpful it was and whether a range of options was discussed. A resource and delivery questionnaire is completed by students on course and is designed to include questions on where the student obtained advice and guidance, whether there was enough time for guidance activities, and how useful it was.

TEC initiatives - Skillchoice and Gateways to Learning

The TEC requires specific data relating to the quality of the services provided to be collected and aggregated.

Service users are required to sign a statement, included as part of the action planning process, to the effect that they are satisfied with the service they have received.

Service users are sent questionnaires three months after their interview to gather data on destinations. These also include an offer to recontact the service if required. A freepost envelope is included to encourage users to respond, data collected is aggregated and analysed by college staff, before being sent off to the TEC in summary form. As part of the evaluation of the Gateways to Learning programme, a representative from the National Institute of Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) undertook an assessment of quality under the initiative.

Developing standards

Funding from ED within the Careers Library Initiative has allowed the college to develop minimum standards for careers information, which are being used throughout the college. The standards relate to currency; comprehensiveness and minimum stock levels; accuracy and accessibility. The standards were prepared by information and guidance staff at the college, with advice from the careers information officer from Hertfordshire Careers Service and then agreed with the relevant line managers. Procedures have been specified to determine who is responsible for taking action; by when; to whom she reports and who ensures that action is taken.

The college's equal opportunities statement is outcome based, and includes indications of potential standards. In addition, a careers and guidance policy exists in draft form, which includes a statement of entitlement to guidance. Mission statements for the helpline and guidance service include statements on confidentiality.

Statements, some of which describe the service and others of which relate to quality standards, are included in bids prepared for external funders, which relate to confidentiality, impartiality, quality of accommodation, and information held.

The college used *Identifying Competences in Educational Guidance* (UDACE, 1991) as a basis for internal discussion about staff competence. Staff are expected to have achieved at least the RSA certificate in Education and Training Guidance for Adults, and five staff, including part-timers, are currently undergoing training. In addition, two staff are currently attending the Masters course in Guidance and Counselling at the University of Luton. The line manager is in the process of being assessed for NVQ level 5 under the Management Charter Initiative. Staff are expected to participate in ongoing staff development activities.

Documentation available

There is a variety of documentation available, including examples of forms for client tracking, for collection of data on client profile and for assessing customer satisfaction. It is expected that a priced pack of information will be available, including the following:

- the questionnaires used including explanatory notes;
- a copy of the course log being used by course tutors;
- case studies to illustrate usage;
- minimum standards set for careers information;
- a description of the project on procedure writing, with relevant outcomes.

For further information contact the Manager for Guidance and Information at the address below.

Oaklands College
Oaklands Campus
Hatfield Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 0JA

Tel: 0727-850651
Fax: 0727-847987

A careers service approach to integrating national systems

Case study - North Yorkshire Careers Service Agency

Introduction

North Yorkshire Careers Service Agency (NYCSA) has been interested in the development of quality initiatives since the funding through the Government strengthening scheme required that the service had a business plan which included both quantitative and qualitative targets.

The service has actively sought to become involved in the following:

1. Targeting and action planning through the Careers Service Strengthening Scheme
2. Citizen's Charter application procedures
3. IIP
4. TQM
5. North Yorkshire County Council Education Department's Performance Management Scheme/Appraisal Procedure

In addition, the County of North Yorkshire is a Pathfinder area for the awarding of contracts by the Secretary of State to run the careers service.

Approach to quality

It is felt that quality initiatives can be amalgamated under the TQM heading.

Key features in a total quality organisation include:

1. Quality business planning mechanisms
2. Communication systems with staff
3. Developing employees' potential
4. Full management commitment to staff
5. Long-term customer evaluation orientation both inside and outside the organisation
6. Controlling work processes/quality assurance
7. Seeking total continuous improvement

Business plan

NYCSA has numerical targets which link to the overall plans and objectives of the business plan. Specific targets are set on a divisional basis, and divisional managers have local responsibility for ensuring that the targets are met. The business plan is widely available in executive summary format, and is published along with an annual report.

The service has applied for the award of The Chartermark (the government scheme to kitemark quality charters), and this has entailed developing service standards for all aspects of the service, for young people as well as adult clients. A PR consultant was employed to help with the presentation of the standards, but the majority of the work relating to quality has been done in-house.

NYCSA is developing a range of product specifications to demonstrate what it can offer particular client groups. This will enable it to define exactly what it is evaluating for the various aspects of quality assurance. These can then be used, alongside the service standards to put together a client entitlement document.

As part of the TQM initiative, NYCSA is currently attempting to rationalise the ways in which they seek customer evaluation; a suggestions and complaints form, is being used already.

NYCSA developed its own appraisal scheme before the overall implementation of North Yorkshire County Council Education Department's Performance Management Scheme. This thorough appraisal scheme will cover all staff, and takes a top- down approach. NYCSA is keen to be gain the IIP award, and find it links in with their other quality initiatives. NYCSA is committed to:

- developing all employees to achieve business objectives;
- review the training and development needs of all employees;
- taking action to train and develop employees on an ongoing basis;
- ooking at how NYCSA evaluates the training and development of staff.

The funding, through the CSB Management Initiative, of a consultant to look at the implementation of TQM, has led to awareness- raising sessions for all members of staff. The service is now at the stage of setting up processes and structures to implement TQM. Staff are also considering self evaluation of the guidance interview using Careers Service Branch checklists, and other customer evaluations at the end of the one-to-one interview.

School agreements have been drawn up annually by the careers service to formalise the arrangements they have with schools. The contract makes it easier to evaluate the work done over the course of the year, and involves the school in negotiating the kind of service they require from NYCSA from a menu of activities.

NYCSA is one of three projects trialling the National Standards and Performance Indicators for the careers service. NYCSA is focusing on whether the standards developed are correct, by checking them out with staff and clients, before moving on to consider the performance indicators. They have devised a questionnaire, which asks about the five elements identified by the CSB as essential to a quality organisation:

- effective and efficient management;
- commitment to equality of opportunity;
- delivery of services to agreed quality standards;
- responsiveness to community need;
- competent staff.

In identifying respondents to the questionnaire they have selected consumers who they know to be frank in their responses, and who have some insight into the work of the careers service. The work done on this project has informed the development of the business plan, and the bidding process for the contract for a new careers service in this Pathfinder area.

All staff are involved in the quality process, with the divisional managers taking on particular responsibility for how systems will work in their areas. As there are so many initiatives underway there is no single formula for who monitors, evaluates and resets

targets. The quality initiatives are all led by senior management with the involvement of staff as appropriate. The TQM approach will ensure that the quality process in NYCSA will be the responsibility of all the staff of the agency.

Careers Service Headquarters
Education Department
County Hall
Northallerton
North Yorkshire DL7 8AE

Tel: 0609-780780

Contact: Deputy Head of Careers Service

Documentation available: The Service Standards are available at a cost of £25.

Contacting us by letter or by phone? We will:

- Respond to your enquiry promptly, helpfully and clearly.
- Answer the telphone within one minute.
- Return calls (if necessary) within 48 hours.
- Acknowledge your letter within 48 hours (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays).
- Reply to letters (where applicable) in detail within five working days indicating who is dealing with your enquiry. If the time exceeds our standard we will keep you informed on progress.

If our service is not as good as you expect or if you want to suggest an improvement please ask the receptionist for our "Suggestions and Complaints" Feedback Form

- At our Careers Centres we regularly survey clients and customers to ask their opinion on our service. The results are published in our Annual Report.
- North Yorkshire Careers Service is committed to the principles and practice of Equal Opportunities for clients, customers and staff.

North Yorkshire Careers Service is provided for you by North Yorkshire County Council as the Local Education Authority working in partnership with North Yorkshire Training and Enterprise Council.

North Yorkshire
CAREERS SERVICE

Service Standards

FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

IT'S YOUR CAREERS SERVICE HELP US TO GET IT RIGHT

We're here to help you.
But you can help us
to provide a better service.

If you want a job there are things you can do for yourself that will give you the best chance.

- Be available for work.
- Actively seek work.
- Visit the Careers Centre every week.
- Go for interviews that we arrange for you.
- Tell us when you find work or training.
- Turn up for appointments on time and let us know if you cannot attend.

To help you we will:

- Display up to date job and training vacancies.
- Give advice on how to look for work.
- Help you to prepare for interviews.
- Give free careers guidance to help you:
  - make realistic decisions
  - choose wisely from the options in education, training or employment
  - explore the range of information about available opportunities.
- Make sure you know who is dealing with your enquiry.

If you need information on education, training and employment prospects in your local area or further afield, we will:

- Provide guidance and assistance from trained and qualified staff.
- Give you access to comprehensive, up to date and unbiased information.
- Treat you with respect and your enquiry in confidence.

Service Standards

FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

When you visit one of our full-time Careers Centres we will:

- Provide a courteous and knowledgeable service.
- Offer clear help and accessible information.
- Make sure you can identify the person who is dealing with your enquiry:
  - Reception staff will wear name badges
  - Everybody will tell you his/her name and role in the service.
- Offer all pupils, students or young job seekers under 19 an individual guidance interview within five working days.
- Provide access to our Careers Centres for disabled clients (where this is not possible staff will arrange assistance to be brought to you).
- For people out of full-time education for two years or more we will arrange:
  - a brief information session
  - access to the Careers Centre Library on the day you call
  - A guidance interview within one month at the latest, but on the day you call if possible.

Standards developed by a TEC guidance network - a multi-agency approach

Case study - AZTEC

Introduction

AZTEC is the TEC covering the boroughs of Wandsworth, Merton and Kingston in south west London.

The TEC has been pro-active in encouraging the development of adult guidance within the remit of the ED brief (i.e. vocational guidance). It sees its role as stimulating a market for guidance, by raising public awareness of the purpose and availability of guidance and by encouraging the development of guidance provision. The TEC decided to develop guidance provision through existing guidance and education and training providers, rather than to set up its own guidance provision.

Following a mapping exercise conducted through external consultants, a pilot guidance voucher project was run from November 1992 until January 1993. The TEC secured Skillchoice funding for 1993-5. A Guidance for Training project is running in 1993-4, funded from the Training for Work budget. The TEC has worked with a local authority in its area to develop an adult Training Credits pilot with guidance provision. It has also collaborated with the local authorities in the area to set up a partnership in order to prepare a bid for providing the careers service from 1995.

The TEC invited local guidance and careers services, adult and further education providers, and training providers to join an adult guidance network.

AZTEC's approach to quality

As the agency responsible for negotiating contracts for funding the various guidance programmes outlined above, the TEC took responsibility for setting up a system of ensuring the quality of guidance provision. The TEC had developed a code of practice and client entitlement statement for the guidance voucher pilot, but did not wish to impose a set of quality standards of its own across the network whose membership was diverse both in organisational structure and experience of guidance. The TEC's approach was to use the experience of the network members to develop quality standards.

A working party was established with representatives from a careers service, an educational guidance service for adults, a training and guidance provider, an adult education provider, and the TEC. This group met several times over a period of six months, drawing on examples of standards from different contexts including the Quest for Quality framework, reproduced in Section 4 of this pack. A draft set of quality standards was produced in March 1993 and presented to the guidance network meeting.

Standards development

The draft standards covered delivering guidance, stating, information, monitoring and feedback, management including equal opportunities, marketing and access, health and safety and premises, administrative systems and networking.

Each area was broken down into:

Standard Definition Direct / indirect measurement

The measurements which would provide evidence of quality were written as questions to which the organisation would answer 'yes' or 'no'. The purpose of this was that the organisation could use the standards document as a checklist and make a plan of action based on the areas requiring improvement (see attached pro forma).

As the standards were a draft document, organisations were asked to use them and feed back recommendations for amending the standards, e.g. where aspects of quality had been omitted, or where wording was unclear. Responses are being collated by the TEC and an updated version of the standards will be produced.

The TEC has subsequently used the draft standards as the key indicator of quality. Organisations contracting with the TEC to provide guidance in the future will be obliged to show how they meet or aim to meet the standards. Having facilitated the development of quality standards the TEC will develop a system of monitoring quality with the adult guidance network members.

Documentation on quality

The Code of Practice and Quality Standards can be obtained from:

Manorgate House
2 Manorgate Road
Kingston-upon-Thames
Surrey KT2 7AL

Tel: 081-547 3934

ADULT GUIDANCE

QUALITY GUIDE

FOR THE BOROUGHS OF:

KINGSTON
MERTON
WANDSWORTH

MARCH 1993

CONTENTS

1. *DELIVERING GUIDANCE*
2. *STAFFING*
3. *INFORMATION RESOURCES*
4. *MONITORING AND FEEDBACK*
5. *MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING INCLUDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES*
6. *MARKETING AND ACCESS*
7. *HEALTH AND SAFETY AND PREMISES*
8. *ADMIN SYSTEMS*
9. *NETWORKING*

1. DELIVERING GUIDANCE

STANDARD	DEFINITION	DIRECT/INDIRECT MEASUREMENT	YES	NO
1.1 Clients are always at the centre of the guidance process	The guidance provided responds to what the client wants, requires and is willing to do The information provided to the clients is impartial	i) Is the client profile taken? ii) Are clients given the opportunity to identify past experience and interests? iii) Is the guidance non-directive? iv) Does the organisation have a range and depth of information to enable clients to make an informed choice? v) Do clients choose their own course of action? vi) Do clients agree action to be taken by themselves and/or guidance officer ie; through an action plan?		
1.2 Clients are inducted to the services provided	Clients have an understanding of the services/contract on offer to decide how to use them	i) Is there verbal communication and/or reproduced material in appropriate language regarding: a) the range of services on offer and their availability eg; times of opening, appointment system, drop in, etc; b) which services are free and which might be charged for; c) "Action Plans" are relevant to the service. When drawn up (and preferably signed) they are a record of the interview; d) the service's policy on health and safety, equal opportunities and confidentiality; e) client dissatisfaction/grievance procedures. ii) Is there a system in place for recording and following up any grievances?		

1. DELIVERING GUIDANCE CONTINUED

STANDARD	DEFINITION	DIRECT/INDIRECT MEASUREMENT	YES	NO
1.3 Guidance reflects available opportunities	The guidance takes account of available opportunities for training/education/ employment/career development/personal development	i) Are clients made aware of all opportunities relevant to their needs? ii) Are clients made aware of non-traditional opportunities? iii) Is the range of opportunities offered recorded ie; action plan/induction?		
1.4 Clients understand the guidance offered	Guidance is delivered using: a) communication methods and styles b) language c) support eg: reassurance, confidence building – appropriate to client need	i) Is client understanding is confirmed ie; by use of open questions? ii) Is there evidence of client understanding eg client contract, client satisfaction questionnaire?		

1. DELIVERING GUIDANCE CONTINUED

STANDARD	DEFINITION	DIRECT/INDIRECT MEASUREMENT	YES	NO
1.5 Clients are empowered by the guidance process	Clients are able to act on what they have learned from the guidance process	i) Do clients receive support/advice to enable them to carry out agreed action? ii) Is advocacy provided where appropriate? iii) Are clients encouraged to use skills learned in the guidance process eg. decision making and transitional skills?		
1.6 Client information is confidential to the service	No client information (personal details) is disclosed to an outside agency without client permission	i) Is a statement on guaranteed confidentiality given to clients (either verbally or in writing)? ii) Does this statement address the following issues: a) policy on asking medical and legal questions; b) security of records eg data protection licence for the computer; c) a policy on confidentiality is agreed with all staff at induction; d) a system for client complaints or breach of confidentiality is in place. iii) Does the organisation have guidelines regarding confidentiality including:– a), b), c), d) iv) Can staff demonstrate understanding of these guidelines?		
1.7 Clients have access to personal detail records		i) Are clients aware they have access to the records? ii) Is there an agreed procedure to ensure access?		

QUALITY STANDARDS FOR GUIDANCE PROVIDERS

Check over the questions you have answered "No" to and consider the following:

IMPROVEMENT TO BE MADE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	RESPONSIBILITY OF	REVIEW BY	COMPLETE BY

Section 7

Further reading

Further reading

Bibliography

Delivering Educational Guidance for Adults FEU / UDACE Vol. 1 1989 Vol 2 1993

The Quest for Quality in Educational Guidance for Adults UDACE 1991 (This also includes a list of further reading for those who wish to explore quality issues in greater depth.)

Quality Matters: Business and industry quality models and further education FEU 1991

Educational Guidance for Adults: Identifying competences FEU 1991

ICG/NAEGA Joint entitlement statement on guidance for adults ICG / NAEGA 1992

Quality Education and Training for the Adult Unemployed FEU / NIACE 1992

Delivering Quality Careers Guidance: a core service for the individual ICG 1992 AZTEC Adult *Guidance Quality Guide* AZTEC 1993

Careers Service - Requirements and Guidance for Providers Careers Service Branch 1993

National Standards and Indicators for the Careers Service Careers Service Branch 1993

Investors in People Standards Department of Employment 1991

Standards in Action FEU 1993

A Charter for Further Education FEU, Briefing Note November 1993

Learners Needs in College-based Guidance FEU 1993

Measure of Guidance Impact NFER 1993

Value Added in Further Education FEU 1993